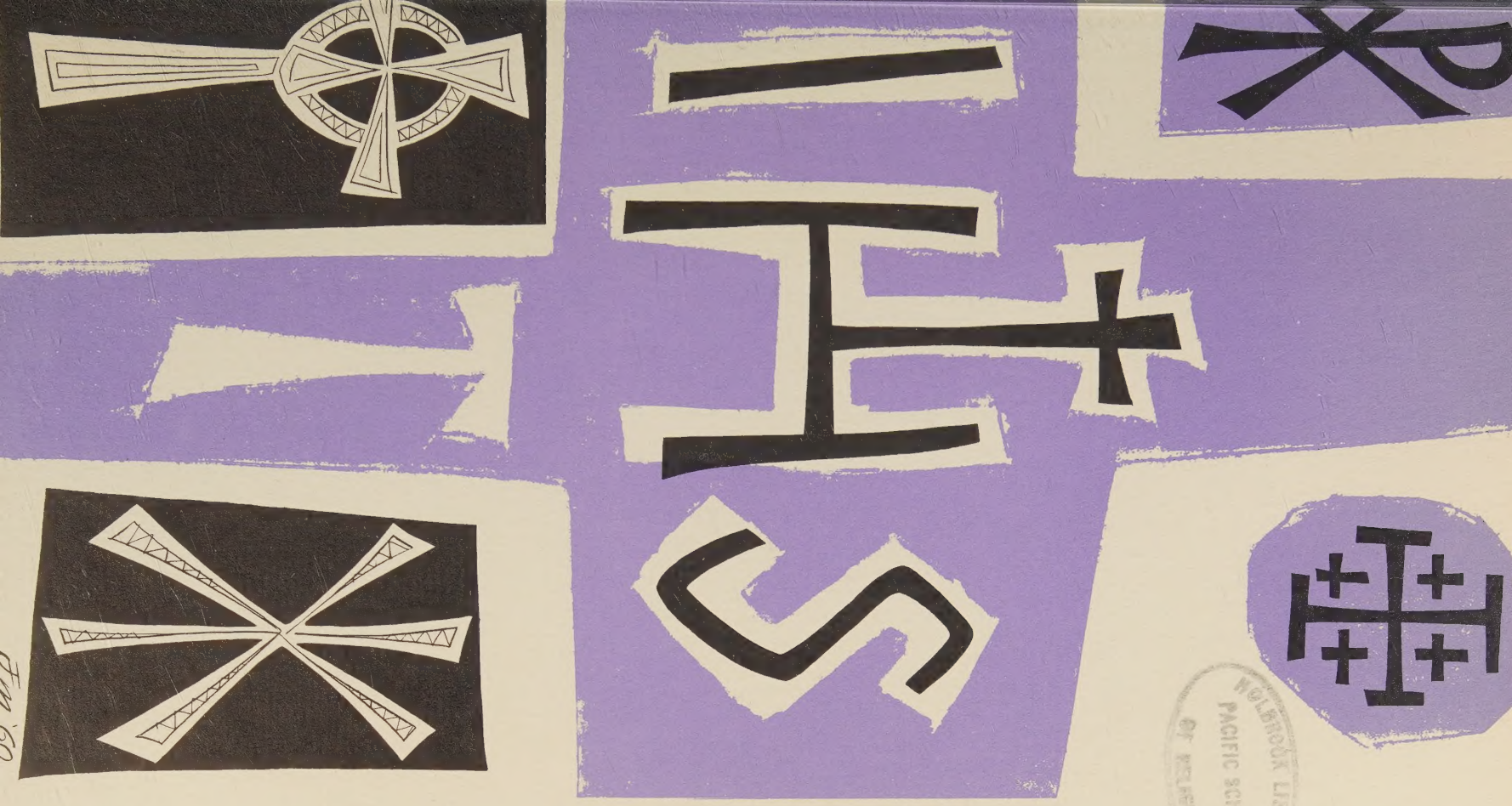

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About This Issue

While the years since World War II have seen an amazing burst of Wesley studies, there remain many who are not yet convinced that John Wesley, as a thinker, is worthy of serious consideration. Some of these skeptics are numbered among the important theologians today. Perkins' Professor of Theology, Albert C. Outler, takes exception to this position and defends his interest in Wesley's thinking vigorously, as you will note in his statements in this issue. "Statements" is probably the correct word, for the article is the Presidential Address delivered to the American Theological Society last April. This form accounts for the technical aspects of some parts of the essay. But its thesis and argument are of sufficiently general concern that it is thought that many readers of the *Journal* will find it interesting.

Franklin H. Littell's paper was also prepared as an address, having been given at the Second Meeting of Professors of Ecumenics at Denver, Colorado, early in September of this year. He is one of the new members of the Perkins faculty, beginning his teaching duties as Professor of Church History during the summer term. He comes from Candler School of Theology at Emory University, with previous experience as Chaplain at Boston University and service as chief Protestant adviser to the U. S. High Commissioner for Germany and later as Senior representative of the Franz Lieber Foundation. He is the father of four lovely girls and a football aspiring fifth grade boy.

The two biblical studies by James M. Ward and Victor Paul Furnish have been written especially for the *Journal*. James Ward, Assistant Professor of Old Testament is on his first year of teaching at Perkins. After doing his undergraduate work at Harvard, he did his B.D. and Ph.D. at Union and has come to Dallas after teaching at Depauw University in Indiana and Syracuse University in New York. He is the father of three boys, ranging from seven years old down to three and one half.

Victor Furnish seems to be the exception —he is a bachelor. . . . but he is still pretty young! Now on his second year of teaching at Perkins, he came directly from his doctoral studies at Yale University. Son of an Iowa Methodist clergyman, he did his undergraduate work at Cornell College in Iowa and his B.D. at Garrett Biblical Institute.

For the most part, it is the policy of the *Journal* staff to have both articles and book reviews written by members of the Perkins faculty. Exceptions in articles are made when they have some direct bearing upon Perkins program and with book reviews when the volume under consideration is written by a member of the Perkins faculty. The first three books reviewed in this issue fall under this classification.

Professor Emeritus Fred Gealey's volume of communion meditations is reviewed by C. Ebb Munden, Pastor of St. Matthew Methodist Church in Metarie, Louisiana. Associate Professor Richey Hogg's fine new volume is evaluated by Yale University's Professor of Missions, Charles W. Foreman. It is appropriate that the Outler article is accompanied by a consideration of Associate Professor of Theology, John W. Deschner's study of Wesley's christology. The reviewer, Philip S. Watson, is Professor of Systematic Theology at Garrett Biblical Institute, coming from British Methodism. He is also known as a distinguished Luther scholar.

Predictably, the art that has been appearing in the pages of the *Journal* during the last year has stimulated a bit of controversy. This is as it should be—why

Continued on page 23

JOHN
WESLEY
BY
JIM McLEAN

(Courtesy *motive* Magazine)

Albert C. Outler

Towards A Re-Appraisal of John Wesley As A Theologian

John Wesley has a secure niche in church history, as a great evangelist and organizer. His stature as a theologian is much more doubtful. Methodists have tended to stress his warm-heart and his zeal—prized virtues among us! Non-Methodists have had scant stimulus to look behind this stereotype.

It may be mere gallantry, then, for me to argue in this august company that:

1. Wesley was a major *theologian.*
2. His methodology and motifs are still significant for contemporary theology.
3. He has rarely been fairly and fully read, whether by his champions or detractors.
4. This is partly due to the fact that there is is no proper (critical) edition of his writings.

I do not expect these propositions to appear self-evidently true. Indeed, I have come to be persuaded of them somewhat latterly, and this in the course of an assignment that has turned out far differently than I had expected.

When the program of A LIBRARY OF PROTESTANT THOUGHT was being shaped up, I proposed a volume of Wesley's specifically theological writings, in a critical text and with proper footnotes—to provide students with some primary source material which is not easily accessible and which consequently goes unread. The idea was coolly received at first, and several counter-proposals were suggested. Why not, said one, put John and Charles together in one volume along with William Fletcher? Or again, put Wesley in a volume along with Whitefield, Venn, Romaine and Simeon. Yet another scheme would have combined Wesley, Zinzendorf and Francke. In the end, it was voted that John Wesley should have a volume of his own—but then, as so often happens, the proposer was handed the job.

It seemed a manageable assignment until I got into it. Partly because of my patristics training and partly because of the reservations earlier expressed, I wanted to do the sort of job on Wesley one would do on Origen or Augustine. The obvious place to begin was with the texts of the various items I wanted to consider for inclusion. It was not till then that I discovered that save for the Curnock edition of the Journal, the Telford edition of the Letters, and the Sugden edition of the Standard Sermons, no serious critical editing had been done on the Wesley corpus since the Jackson edition of 1829-31. What was more, the Jackson edition was neither comprehensive nor critical—and its attention to context and background was negligible. Yet this is the text which has been reprinted throughout the last 130 years without revision—this is the text of the current Zondervan reprint, despite the publisher's blurb about a new edition. Having got that far, it seemed obvious that the Jackson edition should be revised by collating it with the available Wesley manuscripts. It was, you see, "common knowledge" that these manuscripts had been collected and preserved by our British Methodist brethren. So, off I put to England—to be told by the archivist at Epworth House that *no* manuscripts of the theological treatises were known to exist. Further rummaging about proved him to be only slightly wrong. I did find holograph copies of six unpublished sermons, one of the published sermons, unpublished frag-

ments of *The Journal* and background notes for his *Notes on the New Testament*. Incidentally, I stumbled on something else, too: the holograph of Wesley's account of his love affair with Sophie Hopkey prepared for his mother on the first anniversary of Sophie's elopement; and a secretary's copy of Wesley's account of his affair with Grace Murray. Curnock had seen both manuscripts, but collation showed that he had published bowdlerized versions of them with no indication as to the places where his Wesleyan piety and Victorian taste dictated omissions. These minor additions to the materials for a biography helped to make Wesley a more believable and complex person than his published *Journals* display—but they add nothing significant to his theological writings, so cannot be included in the LPT volume.

The next best thing to do was to collate the Jackson text with the pre-Jackson editions of the items I wanted—only to find here that Wesley had had very bad luck with his printers, had usually been too busy to correct his proofs, and had allowed the printers to discard the manuscripts after the first printing. One way and another—with more help from the Wesleyana collections in the States and Canada—I have finally got a fairly reliable text, collated against Wesley's handwritten annotations in his set of the Pine edition of 1770 which is now in the Library of Richmond College.

As a relief from this picayunish work, I compiled a list of the books that Wesley cited and started to plow through them in the British Museum and the Dr. Williams Library. At Oxford, John Bodley's Librarian (himself a Canon of Christ Church) helped me explore the libraries of Christ Church and Lincoln, and check on what was there in Wesley's day. I "discovered" what everybody else may already have known: that even if Hanoverian Oxford was in a slump, the deposits of Fell and Aldrich at Christ Church were very impressive, especially in patristics. Remembering that Wesley at Oxford was an obsessive-compulsive neurotic, driven to improve each shining hour, I began to see something of the pattern of his "sources." He was a voracious reader but not always careful or docile. He soaked up selective impressions and then stocked them for subsequent use. But it soon became plain that his controlling interest was *theological.*

The portrait that was emerging in this study was both familiar and unfamiliar—and I began to realize that the tradition of Wesley biography, formed by the first biographers (Whitehead, Moore and Tyerman) had never been seriously challenged. It was from them that the notion derived that Wesley's theology was a subordinate interest to his really important business: managing the Revival and founding the Methodist church. Alexander Knox is almost the only exception to this general view. In a letter to Hannah More, Knox (tutor to Jebb, tutor to Keble) asserted that Wesley's interest was primarily theological—and unique in what Knox called his synthesis of Augustine and Chrysostom! The more I have read, the clearer is my conviction that Knox had the better of it over Wesley's Methodist biographers.

Wesley's theology has been understood—or misunderstood—in a wide variety of ways. Cell discovered the Calvinist in him; Piette identified his catholic emphases but misidentified them as Roman; Cannon's Wesley resembles a mid-nineteenth century American Methodist, Hildebrandt's a Lutheran pietist; in Dillenberger and Welch's *Protestant Christianity* he gets lost amongst the 18th century evangelicals; Lee makes him out a fore-runner of 19th century liberalism; Knox finds him amongst the enthusiasts, Rupp amongst the Puritans; Otto Nall represents the majority view in seeing him as a theological indifferentist whose favorite motto was "Think and Let Think." There is, of course, a core of fact in each of these images but none of them displays the man in sufficient depth.

I have no hope of succeeding where better men have failed, but in the course of what began as a minor editorial chore a new image of Wesley as a theologian has taken shape in my mind, which makes more sense to me than the others. In such cases one must always suspect that sort of academic vanity which makes like Jack Horner with hypotheses in place of plums. It is vain to disavow vanity. But it has occurred to me that an equally competent monograph on Philoxenus of Mabbogh or Matthew of Acquasparta would earn more praise in *Academia* than anything I might write about John Wesley.

Wesley was no theological titan, no system builder, no theologian's theologian. Christian egg-heads have never loved him—nor was he fond of us. His speculative powers were limited, partly from disuse. By design and intent he was a folk theologian. The substance of his thought was gained from reading and conference, but its form was shaped by the exigences of an incessant popular ministry. Unlike the typical evangelist, however, Wesley's popular ministry was consistently directed by his basic theological convictions. For half a century he was in one controversy after another—and all of them theological. In each of them his stand was defined by what he took to be the essence of "genuine Christianity": "justification by faith and holiness of heart, together with a life consistent with the same." Practical questions were decided by theological norms and theological questions judged by their import for experimental Christianity. As preacher, author and publisher, Wesley's chief concern was with what nowadays we call "theology for the layman." His constant aim was "plain words for plain people." For those of us who do not fear or despise *hoi polloi,* Wesley is worth considering as a theologian-evangelist, doubly and equally concerned for Christian truth and its actual manifestation in uncommon living by common people. We are all uneasy, albeit in varying measure, with popular Christianity. But is there not a vital office in the Christian community for the folk theologian whose intellectual competence is high, if not actually first-rate, who makes it his business to formulate the Christian message so that plain men may believe and live it understandingly? Wesley chose this office and served it with distinction.

His "folk theology" was a unique fusion of many traditions controlled by his intention to undercut or bypass the classical disjunctions between Roman and Protestant extremes. He believed in faith *and* good works, scripture *and* tradition, revelation *and* reason, sovereign grace *and* human freedom, particularism *and* universal redemption, the witness of the Spirit *and* an ordered polity, repentance *and* the expectation of perfection, the priesthood of all believers *and* an authorized representative ministry. This is to say, of course, that John Wesley was an eclectic, as is any theologian worth his salt. The real question about eclecticism is the principle of eclection and the elements of the fusion. In Wesley's case the principle can be called *evangelical catholicism.* The elements are chosen from almost every band in the theological spectrum. He began with a wide acquaintance with the kaleidoscope of 17th century English theology and borrowed freely: (1) from the Puritans: their doctrine of the Christian life; (2) from the Nonjurors: their emphasis upon liturgy as the main factor in Christian continuity; (3) from the Caroline divines (Taylor, Beveridge, Tillotson, Horneck, *et. al.*); (4) even from the Latitudinarians (Stillingfleet, Tillotson, Burnet, *et. al.*) with their preference for "comprehension" over "toleration". Early on, he took a flyer with William Law, Michael Molinos, and the French Quietists. At Oxford he began the lifelong study of patristics, with a special interest in the Fathers of the Desert. He modeled the Holy Club on fourth century monastic patterns as he had learned them from "Macarius the

Egyptian"—naturally unaware that in the Macarian corpus he was reading a composite of Alexandrine and Cappadocian ascetical theology. Ephraim Sirus guided his interest in hymnody and liturgy. He carried with him to Georgia (as part of one of the strangest libraries a missionary ever had!) the two folio volumes of Beveridge's *Synodikon*—an immense collection of Eastern canons and liturgies—and he not only studied this with his "select company," but also used his Savannah parishioners as guinea pigs in some strange liturgical experiments based on this material. The response he got was an accusation that he was neither proper Anglican, Roman nor Dissenter—a malicious charge but one not as far off the mark as has been thought.

When Wesley landed at Deal, February 1, 1738, the substance of his theology was already in his head. It still had to pass from head to heart, be shaped in the forge of controversy and justified at the bar of history. But very little new *doctrine* was thereafter added or lost. In his last days aboard the *Samuel* he undertook a retrospective appraisal of his theological development and wrote out the results in a very interesting memorandum.

Not that this mattered very much at the time—for Wesley was a sadly discredited man, pathetically uncertain of his future. For a dozen years since his conversion of 1725 he had toiled himself, and dragged others along with him, on the ascetic way which "Marcarius" had taught him would lead to "freedom from anxiety" (*apátheia*) and "full salvation" (*teleiosis*). In the Holy Club and in Georgia he was, in his own eyes, a *proestos* of the sort described in "Macarius" as the leader of a monastic company. His fantastic plans had miscarried, wildly. It is hard to see "a practical genius" in the John Wesley of those first thirty-five years. At the same time he had begun to react violently against "the Quietists," for there is a great gulf fixed between "Macarius" and Molinos, and Wesley instinctively preferred the Eastern notion of *synelthesis* and *synergeia* to either the Roman or the Protestant forms of "stillness."

And yet, in less than two years, this compulsive little man, with his strange talent for charming a few and offending many, had become the acknowledged leader of a highly successful religious movement that was to grow under his hand through the succeeding half-century. How does one account for this remarkable change?

Lord Macaulay's schoolboy knows the answer: "Aldersgate." This has been the dramatic focus of Wesley mythology ever since Whitehead and Moore wrote their first biographies. It seems a pity to demythologize it now. Yet neither the schoolboys nor the scholars have noticed the paucity of Wesley's own references to Aldersgate nor the many other decisive events he cites, nor yet other and earlier passages (e.g., in the Georgia *Journals*) which recount similar moments of exaltation and ecstasy. But, most important of all, there is the evidence that after "Aldersgate" he continued to be troubled with just those symptoms of spiritual unsettlement which real faith was supposed to remove. It was after Aldersgate and at Herrnhut that the Moravians, who had taught him the difference between the faith of a servant and the faith of a son, fenced him from the Lord's table as *homo perturbatus*.

This is not to deny that Aldersgate was a pivotal event in Wesley's career. It was a real conversion: from belief to faith, from hoping to having. Yet it was only *one* in a series of events stretching from the first miscarriage of the Georgia mission to the half-unexpected success of his first essays at field preaching. It was this last, more than "Aldersgate," that settled Wesley's heart and vocation. Peter Boehler had counseled him to "preach faith until you have it and then because you have it you will preach it;" that is, preach the doctrine of justification by faith (which Wesley had always

believed) until he had the personal assurance of it, so that his preaching could be "testimony." But what actually happened was that Wesley "preached faith" until *others* had it—and it was *their* faith that confirmed *his* and launched him on his evangelical mission. After the Revival gets under way, the echoes of inner turmoil fade out of Wesley's writings almost altogether, displaced by a Macarian *apatheia* ("unanxiousness") which is rarely shaken, whether in tumult or triumph.

Success brought controversy and the necessity of drawing the line between doctrinal essentials and *adiaphora*—where he *was* willing to "think and let think." The first rift came with the Moravians, to whom he was closely bound and deeply indebted. But it began to be increasingly plain that their emphasis upon "stillness," their contempt for "the means of grace," and their phobia against "works righteousness" amounted to antinomianism. Here Wesley drew a sharp and rigid line—for antinomianism was, in his eyes, as dreadful a heresy as justification by works. Justification by the faith-which-works-through-love is the bedrock on which everything rests in Wesley's theology. One of his very first publications (1739) is an abridgment of the first four Edwardean *Homilies*. He digested thirty-six quarto pages into twelve duodecimo pages—with few visible seams—and entitled the tract "The Doctrine of Salvation, Faith, and Good Works, Extracted from the Homilies of the Church of England." This tract must be understood as Wesley's own theological manifesto. It defined a position from which he never wavered: the fusion of soteriology and ethics. "Our faith in Christ comes first," he says, "but thereafter must be nourished with good works," for faith is in order to righteousness, as justification by faith quite literally implies.

The Moravians took this as a denial of the first article of the Reformation. In retort, Wesley spoke of their "foolish solifidianism," "the German stillness," and addressed an astonishing epistle to the Moravian leaders, reviewing the controversy and reaffirming his *synergism* (Eastern style, that is). This was all painful and sad—but the doctrinal issue was clear: faith generates a process of growth and discipline aimed at spiritual and moral perfection. The Moravians were right in identifying this as catholic teaching but mistaken in tagging it "popery." It was, instead, the tradition of Cranmer and Taylor, of Gregory of Nyssa, Chrysostom and the authors of the so-called "Spiritual Homilies of Macarius."

His next great doctrinal struggle was with the "Calvinists" and it was over "predestination." Wesley had no quarrel with the Calvinist doctrine of God's sovereignty. On this point he said, "We stand not a hair's breadth from Calvinism." He was a grateful heir to the English Puritans and the new England revivalists, notably Jonathan Edwards. But when George Whitefield began in 1739 "to preach the decrees," Wesley was drawn into yet another painful struggle within his own familiar company. Certainly at first he had no special objection to the doctrine of predestination when taught and held as "an opinion" (that is, as one way among others of confessing God's sovereign grace). But the Calvinists made it an essential. Whereupon Wesley opposed it as invalid, on three grounds: (1) all the varied versions of predestination, when developed, turn out to be "double," with a strict entail of "irrespective reprobation." To Wesley, this impugned the goodness of God, which could not be rehabilitated by an appeal to "the secret providence of God." (2) The decrees may comfort the elect but they tend to inhibit the sinner's hunger and thirst for righteousness—and so add to the gravitational pull of antinomianism; (3) *pre*destination confuses the *temporal* dimensions of the *ordo salutis*. It seeks to preserve God's initiative by placing it in the past; and insures against the future by ignoring its radical uncertainty. Wesley

had learned (again mostly from the Easterners) that Jesus Christ is *the* Elect Man in whom all God's children are elected, that the Holy Spirit is the active Agent of election, that the living present is the "time" of election, that election may be and normally is renewed moment by moment but it also may lapse and be regained—but never without the risk of waning faith or new rebellion. Predestination, in Wesley's eyes, was either an indifferent or else an actually bad way to interpret the essential truth of God's sovereignty and freedom to act in and for his creatures. In 1740 he published a sermon entitled "Free Grace;" in 1770 he issued a minute condemning Calvinism as "poison to faith." This, incidentally, confirmed the schism between the Wesleyan Methodists and the Calvinist evangelicals (largely associated with the Countess of Huntingdon). In 1752 and in 1774 he wrote two very interesting essays, *Predestination Calmly Considered* and *Thoughts Upon Necessity*. All of this got him tagged with the pejorative label "Arminian."

This brings us to a very complicated problem that I have not yet unraveled to my full satisfaction: Wesley's relation to Arminius. *If* he read Arminius *himself* before 1740, I do not know the evidence to prove it. He did read him after 1742, and when in 1778 he established a house organ to counteract the Calvinist propaganda, he called it *The Arminian Magazine*. But in his little tract "What Is An Arminian?" the answer boils down to any Christian who denies irrespective reprobation and affirms some version of the doctrine of universal redemption. But this is clearly not a specific connection with Arminius himself. My guess is that Wesley agreed with the thesis of Peter Heylin's *Historia Quinquarticularis* that Arminius was a Protestant specimen of a genus of Christian teachers whose tradition runs unbroken back to ancient times. I would not want to belaud Heylin as a historian, but it is worth noting that in Arminius' own library (as Bangs has shown) the largest fraction is composed of patristic items. Obviously, Wesley agreed with Arminius against Gomarus and the canons of Dort—and for a time, at least, he worked with the Amyraldean distinction between conditional and *un*conditional election.

It was a dangerous thing for Wesley to give umbrage to the Calvinists, for it insured their settled distaste for him—and in the two centuries since, they have given him a bad press by repeating in scorn what some Methodists assert with misplaced pride: Wesley's proper posture was on horseback or a stump, not in the library chair; his genius was not in his head but in his heart.

A third collision occurred early in the Revival with the administration of the established Church. Ironically enough, it was Joseph Butler (a great theologian) who first threatened Wesley with an interdiction for preaching without a local license; and it was Edmond Gibson (a great canonist) who refused to interdict him, even in the face of worse provocation than Butler had to bear. The 18th century Church of England was a church in doldrums, thwarted in almost every effort to rise to the challenge of its time and to set its house in order. The foremost obvious reasons for its predicament were: (1) its Erastian submission to the civil power; (2) its unpreparedness for the social upheavals that kept unsettling the Restoration Settlement; (3) the suspension of Convocation; (4) the untoward results of the Acts of Toleration—whereby the Church of England simply ceased to be *the* Church of England and of all English Christians.

In such a situation, where the *ministerium ordinarium* was hindered in its function, Wesley conceived of himself as a *minister extraordinarius*, commissioned by the Holy Spirit for a special mission in and for the Church. He would have welcomed specific authorization for this project, but, even without it, he felt warranted because he understood his ordination at Oxford as

an extraparochial license. He believed he was following the precedents of men like John Gilpin and the sequestered ministers of the Commonwealth. Thus warranted, he proceeded to employ lay preachers as his "curates," responsible to the Church. He made a sharp distinction between "preacher" and "minister"—and imposed it on his preachers with or without their agreement. His "ordinations" of 1784 were, essentially, a futile attempt to delegate *his* vicarial authority to American surrogates. He was dismayed when the American Methodists struck out on their own path without much more than lip service to their British "father-in-God."

The point to this digression is that Wesley's troubles with his fellow Anglicans were more deeply theological than political or practical. Wesley's ministry *was* irregular; Wesley's personality *was* a nuisance; but history plainly shows that irregularities and nuisances are not unusual or insoluble problems for Anglicans. Wesley's real offense was his doctrine and his discipline. His doctrine was denounced as "enthusiasm;" his discipline was deplored as fanaticism. Wesley's main response is to be found in his *Earnest Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion.* I am inclined to think that this is the most important single essay that he ever wrote. In it he defends his mission and message first against the Deists, then against the Latitudinarians, and finally against those Tory churchmen with whom, as a congenital conservative, he had the most natural ties. The skeleton of his argument is simpler than its detail and nuances. He poses as a question whether anyone will deny that England desperately needs a revival of religion. The Methodist movement is such a revival; its teachings are the plain, old doctrines of the Henrician reformers, the ancient fathers and the apostles; its discipline is the effort to apply the gospel in practice with utter seriousness. Methodists (this is an ironic twist, for Wesley disliked the term "Methodists" and turned it on his tormentors to mean "ideal Christian") are immune to the doubts of the rationalists, for men insensitive to the data of revelation cannot reason to valid conclusions on any question touching revelation, including the question of whether there *is* such a thing or not. If rationalists want to be rational about religion, they must take it seriously (i.e., become Methodists). Men of real religious concern ought to make common cause with the Methodists or, at the very least, not hinder them. The chief business of the Revival is the ordering of Christian life to its full potential, assuming that men have God-given powers to respond to God in faith, to grow in grace, and to attain whatever *telos* God has in store for his children. The Methodists take the gospel seriously and rely on God's promises of full salvation with a lively expectation. This is *not* "enthusiasm"—for that, rightly defined, is the presumption that makes inner feeling the *judge* of Scripture, tradition, and reason. Wesley is as brusque with real "enthusiasts" as are those critics of his who charge *him* with enthusiasm. Religious truth is given in experience but not created by experience.

Wesley's doctrine of "experience" or "assurance" (not quite but nearly synonymous terms) is actually a doctrine of religious knowledge. It can be shown, I think, that his mentors here, other than the Fathers, are Berkeley (the *New Theory of Vision*), John Norris (the *Oxford* Platonist) and Malebranche. He was an idealist, but of a rather special sort—significantly distinct from the Hegelian Lotzean tradition. As omnipotent and constant Creator, God has utterly free access to every creature and every creaturely process. Human awareness of God is not of his being *"there,"* but of his always having been *"here."* It is therefore, a sort of primitive knowledge, as is our knowledge of self and of the elemental categories of thought: immediate, indemonstrable, undeniable. It is, in this respect, analogous with sensation, for sense experience as such is immediate, incommu-

nicable and immune from doubt. Doubt and error begin, in both cases, with interpretation and practical judgment—and are as prolific as any skeptic would assert. But the aboriginal power of vision remains—and with it the capacity of being aware of God. The Scriptures provide infallible testimony which the Holy Spirit may then transform into inward self-understanding and authentic faith. This experience of the transformation of belief into trust is "present," "immediate"—as palpable in its order as the sight of color or the smell of food. But it is not an epiphany nor does it yield magical knowledge or dispositive power. It is rather like the confidence which a child gains when he "experiences" the "buoyancy" of water—and starts swimming. The "experience" of buoyancy is neither an inference nor merely a confirmed hypothesis. It is an operative reality, as prerequisite to action as action is prerequisite to judgment. The Christian's "assurance" of God's justifying, reconciling love is of this order. It can be lost, it can be corrupted; it can be regained and refined. It can even be matured, so that as the faithful Christian grows into the habit of trusting God's love he can also come to trust his own intention to love God above all else and all else in God. *This* is "perfection," the true *skopos* and *telos* of the Christian life.

This brings us, finally, to the notorious and vexed question of Wesley and perfection—his most distinctive and misunderstood teaching. On this score he has been badly pummeled by those who took it for granted that what he meant by perfection, possible in *this* life, was what Aquinas and the Westminster divines had insisted was "reserved for the state of glory only." His indignant denial that he taught a notion of "sinless perfection" was taken to prove that he was simply unwilling to stand by the implications of his own premises. Wesley never qualified his claim that "perfection" was his most nearly distinctive doctrine. But he was lamentably unsuccessful in explaining it to those who already knew what it meant. I think that I now can show that at least a good deal of the cross-talk came from the fact that Wesley's critics were denying the Latin tradition of *perfectus est* while Wesley was affirming a somewhat impressionistic version of the Eastern tradition of *teleosis*. I do not pretend that Wesley mastered the niceties of the Christian Platonists—but he did pick up some of their leading notions and adapt them to his evangelical enterprise. He explicitly tells us that his notion of the ideal Christian (*The Character of a Methodist*) was modeled on Clement's portrait of the Christian Gnostic in the *Miscellanies*, VII. He took Clement's distinction of the vertical levels of *pistis* and *gnosis* and altered it to be a horizontal line of genetic development with decisive *phases*. Faith is the threshold of the Christian life and establishes the basis for "the rise and progress of religion in the human soul." The notion of *gnosis* is decerebrated and made equivalent to *agape*. The fullness of love is the fullness of salvation and the essence of sanctification. As he had learned from the Eastern ascetics, the interim between justification and sanctification is a rocky path demanding a true *askesis* in order to advance to the *telos* in which faith and love are fused. But this is a process extended through time, and if at any given moment a man's conscious intentions are wholehearted, he is, in and for that moment, *teleios* ("perfect").

The goal of the Christian discipline is freedom from the tyranny of evil and the achievement of a Christian *apatheia*—not apathy, but unanxious striving. Dropping off the speculative gantry of these ideas, Wesley shaped them into a message that the goal *of* life is attainable *in* life—though obviously by the same sort of unmerited gift from God that bestirred justifying faith. But if the goal of life is attainable, it should then be sought and "expected" (in the quite literal sense of *expectare*)—and this by every serious Christian. "Perfection," "holiness," "sanctification," "full

salvation" are simply so many terms to denote one thing—loving God above all else and all else in God, so far as one's *conscious* will and *deliberate* acts are concerned. The antonym to "perfection," in Wesley's mind, was "idolatry:" the conscious preference of some *creature* to the Creator. Wesley knew, as well as anybody else, that our *sarx* is with us for life, at enmity with both *nous* and *pneuma*. The counterbalance to his doctrine of perfection is his doctrine of sin in believers—which recognizes that growth in grace entails the uncovering of hitherto unwitting sins and entanglements—and that each such "discovery" precipitates a crisis. One either repents and so maintains his loyalty to God—that is, his "perfection"—or else he ratifies with his conscious will his hitherto indeliberate defect—and so lapses from his "perfection." Wesley's critics assumed that a doctrine of earthly perfection was "soft" on sin. Wesley retorted that the deniers of *his* kind of perfection credited sin with a greater power than the grace of God, at least so long as the soul was in the body.

Normally, Wesley thought that the gift of full salvation was given in the *articulis mortis*. Then, if ever, a man faces the radical question of his supreme loyalty in utter seriousness. This notion helps to explain Wesley's lifelong interest in the *ars moriendi* and his diligent collection of "good deaths." There is, however, no theoretical hindrance to its occurrence before death—which only is to say that it would seem *possible* for a Christian to love God above all else as far as his conscious volition in the matter was concerned. But what is so received may also be cast away, and what is cast away may also be recovered. The decisive function of Wesley's doctrine of perfection was its stimulus to valid Christian aspiration and its reminder that faith is perfected in love. *Teleiosis* does not mean "fulfilled and finished." It means "up to par thus far."

What happened to Wesley's doctrine of perfection is a sad story. Friends and foes alike too easily heard the Latin connotation of *perfectus est* and had little feeling for the Eastern monastic background from which Wesley had drawn his ideas. In our time, it has come to be child's play to shatter both pretensions to and expectations of "righteousness." But the iconoclasts have discovered that a forensic and putative righteousness is not really rousing good news to modern men who are quite literally sick of the dichotomy between soteriology and ethics which has come to be in vogue. Wesley's real concern with "perfection" was that it held soteriology and ethics together in vital balance and so signified the fullness and integrity of the Christian life. Where shall we look today for this kind of balance in contemporary theology?

All I can say about Wesley's doctrine of grace—without elaboration—is that he thought of grace as the divine energy in and for persons (thus prevenient and cooperating, as well as saving). Grace is sacramental (*i.e.*, always meditated in and through the creature) but not sacerdotal (*i.e.*, never at man's disposal).

I've left no time to speak in detail of his notions of the church and the ministry, his political philosophy (violently "Tory") or his economic views—which were more medieval than modern. I make nothing of his genius for organization nor his unintended contribution of another denomination to the Protestant *potpourri*. It is enough, here and now, to contend that, quite apart from his place in ecclesiastical history, John Wesley deserves a theological re-appraisal of his place in the history of Christian thought and of his relevance for contemporary theology. As matters now stand, he is not really accessible to scholarly study and will not be until there is a properly edited edition of his works. But would this be of serious use and value to any but the Methodists—who have managed comfortably without one now for quite a spell?

In some ways Wesley was a pathetic figure. The movement he founded had al-

ready altered the course he had set for it even before he died. In America, especially, Wesley has been invoked oftener than he has been read and usually has been read with a low-church anti-intellectualist bias that celebrates his warm heart and worn saddlebags, unconcerned with his theology. But this very pathos could rescue the study of Wesley from the genetic fallacy that haunts most denominational histories. It is more important, I have come to believe, to study Wesley's theology in the light of his antecedents than his successors. Such a study would, I think, exhibit a theological method and temper of uncommon relevance for contemporary theology in the new epoch before us—a method that takes the business of "lay theology" seriously and practices it successfully; that is ecumenical in the crucial sense of being both evangelical and catholic; that appropriates more of the patristic tradition and orthodox ethos than any other version of Protestant Christianity; that offers something like a "third way" in many of the two-valued disjunctions that plague modern Christianity ("liberalism" vs. "neo-orthodoxy;" "Protestant" vs. "Catholic;" those that praise God and denigrate man vs. those who praise man and patronize God; the breast-beaters vs. the tub-thumpers; the egg-heads vs. the hucksters). Wesley's theology is no panacea for all our ills and dangers. But the intentions of his theology and its basic method deserve to be reconsidered as a fruitful resource—amongst many others, of course—for ecumenical theologizing, today and tomorrow.

Franklin
H.
Littell

Reflections on the Ecumenical Situation in America

For more than ten years my primary professional commitment has been to foster what that patriarch of the ecumenical movement, Professor Adolphe Keller, always called "the trans-Atlantic dialogue." It is this dialogue which above all has shaped my view of Church History and the present responsibilities of alert churchmen in America. This experience was not a solitary one, however, for one of the most important efforts of the churches of America in the post-war period has been directed toward the needs of Europe, the former center of Christendom. Many hundreds of men and women have served on the Continent since 1945, working for the World Council of Churches, Lutheran World Service, the Mennonite Central Committee, the American Friends Service Committee, Church World Service, CARE and Cralog, the Brethren Service Commission, and many other agencies. Dozens who have participated in the work of relief and reconstruction are now teaching in our colleges and seminaries, enlarging the students' view of the religious dimension of the North Atlantic community.

Life on the Frontier between Europe and America

Ours was a "borderline" situation. You will recall Paul Tillich's earlier autobiographical writing[1] in which he interpreted the theological significance of standing on the frontier between rural and city life, between North German austerity and Rhineland culture, and—above all—between two civilizations and languages. Nothing leads more readily to objectifying and examining those associations and adjustments previously taken for granted than to live on the "border-line."

Nor should we forget the parallel work of Roman Catholic and Jewish agencies, responding in their own way to the crisis of Europe after Hitler. Representatives of the

[1] Tillich, Paul, *The Religious Situation* (New York: Henry Holt & Company, 1932).

three major faiths cooperated in the Religious Affairs Staff of the American Military Government, in the Council of Voluntary Agencies and with the office of the U. N. High Commissioner for Refugees. The activities of the international voluntary agencies became one of the most important forces in influencing international relations and also the foreign policy decisions of our own government.

In this generation the religious communities in the USA have become the main source of supply of material and personnel for Roman Catholic/Protestant/Jewish efforts all around the world. The largest number of missionaries and fraternal workers came from the USA. The financial and institutional center of Protestantism has shifted to the USA, a process already noted in the International Missionary Council's 1928 *Statistical and Interpretative Survey*. And, in spite of the traditional symbol of the Vatican State and the recent achievement of the long awaited Jewish state, the financial, cultural, and religious centers of Roman Catholic and Jewish civilization are also in the USA. In our view of Church History and its periodization this means that we might divide the eras something as follows: Palestine, the Mediterranean Matrix, the Roman World, the Holy Roman Empire, the state-church (Protestant and Catholic) Reformations, the ecumenical age of missions and inter-church cooperation—preeminently the era of the Free Churches, the "Younger Churches." But this is to anticipate a conclusion as to what American participation in the world religious scene means to the traditional theology and historiography.

It was natural that the American churches, once planted by and dependent upon the Protestant and Catholic establishments of Europe, should respond to the desperate needs of European Christendom. And in this we should not forget the spontaneous and often unorganized generosity of the American people. Father Edward McSweeney, in his *American Voluntary Aid for Germany, 1945-50*,[2] has shown that the spontaneous response of the American people equalled the organized efforts of the religious agencies. His conclusions on relief and reconstruction in Germany hold good for our relations with other Continental peoples. (This was the first postwar "people-to-people" program!) But whereas the emotions of a whole people tend to swing in ambivalent extremes of repulsion and attraction, for example: between hatred of Hitler and the postwar love affair of America and the German Federal Republic, the dialogue between Christians runs a more constant course. We have a common destiny, even if Europe has now entered a "post-Christian civilization" and America is now harvesting the fruits of a century and a half of mass evangelism and triumphant church expansion.

But this does not mean that our historical situation is the same. Quite often scholars have drawn too close a parallel between European and American church history. John Baillie, in a little book published in the midst of the war, used the same terms to describe the religious situation in Europe and America. His question was, *What is Christian Civilization*? He concluded that although the churches are now confronted by a phenomenon new in the history of civilization, with millions who have abandoned religious affiliation and attendance, it is wrong

> . . . to hold as of no account the Christianity which pervades the life of the community before it is confirmed in the personal decision of every individual citizen.[3]

He felt that at least in Britain and America there are residual values which make

[2] McSweeney, Edward, *American Voluntary Aid for Germany, 1945-1950* (Freiburg: Caritas-Verlag, 1950).

[3] Baillie, John, *What is Christian Civilization?* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1945), pp. 25, 35, 41.

"Christendom" a viable concept. But this descriptive term, presupposing a form of religion, legally or socially established, cannot today be applied to the American religious scene. For seven generations, to be sure, American churches were but colonies of European Christendom. But now they are moving along different lines from the European pattern, and are beginning to develop a self-consciousness not as settlements of Europe but revealing their own genius. Religion in America cannot be called "Christendom."

Indeed, a basic conclusion to which I have come as a result of the trans-Atlantic dialogue is that although the American churches were once colonies of Europe—paralleled to the political colonies, and in some respects still functioning as part of European Christendom—in our basic patterns and direction we are now nearer to the "younger churches" of Asia-Africa and the islands of the sea.

America Now Belongs to the Period of the "Younger Churches"

American Protestantism has been shaped primarily by a view of the Church which was restitutionist rather than reformed, by five generations of mass evangelism and energetic home and foreign missions, by massive Catholic and Jewish immigrations capped by the emergence of a "post-Protestant" pattern of voluntaryism and pluralism in religious affairs. In this, although our habitual mind set continues to be filial and our seminary curricula and scholarly writings largely portray a continuum from the 16th century to the present, we are in fact closer to the "younger churches" and—like them—to the churches of the sub-Apostolic age, than we are to the European Christendom which dominated Church History (and its textbooks and apologetics) from the time of Charlemagne up to the challenge of Nazi and Communist totalitarianism. To conclude the paragraph, let me suggest that the basic issue before the American churches —and that to be settled in the lifetime of those here present—is whether we are headed into a new "Constantinian settlement" or a rebirth of evangelical faith and witness. Are we going back to an imagined "Christian America," to the Founding Fathers of "states' rights" and "private initiative," —both of which, we are told, are New Testament concepts!—or are we to continue to press forward toward the day when the whole world shall gather about the hill of the Lord?

If we find our way out of the present pressures on behalf of the American Religion, pressures which are disturbingly parallel to the combination of pietism and positivism in pre-Hitler Germany, it will be largely because of the strength of missionary and ecumenical concern which graces our heritage and still informs our congregations. It is this quality which reveals American Protestantism's universal and catholic dimension, a dimension not amply regarded by those solely fascinated by our multiplicity of sects and free religious associations. Quite apart from the many movements toward federation and union, the churches in America co-operate in dozens of organizations with special purposes to a degree not found anywhere else in the world. Scarcely a city in the land is without its federation or council of churches. Counties, states, and regions are also well supplied. Temperance, prison reform, peace, social service of all kinds, social action, women's work, campus ministries—these issues and many more are the platforms of inter-church co-operation to a degree unknown on the Continent and rare in Great Britain.

By way of contrast: in Germany, long years of hard work and much outside support have finally produced a kind of National Council of Churches (*Arbeitsgemeinschaft der Christl. Kirchen*) with a half-time director, a Stuttgart Ecumenical Committee which has held an annual conference

since 1950 and operates as a free association, and an Ecumenical Committee of the Kirchentag which plans for the thousands of non-Germans who attend the great laymen's rally every two years. When Nils Ehrenstrom, now of Boston University, made a survey of ecumenical education in the German churches and faculties in 1950 under the auspices of the American Military Government,[4] he found only two vigorous Ecumenical Seminars functioning in institutions—at Heidelberg under Edmund Schlink and at Marburg under Ernst Benz. These are both fine centers. But the overall picture has scarcely changed in ten years, although before his untimely death last May, Hans Joachim Iwand had laid the foundations for an institute at Bonn to feature East-West encounters, and Martin Schmidt at Mainz has been working for years to establish a study institute on Anglo-American church life. On the Continent "ecumenical co-operation" has for long been defined predominantly as the foreign relations of the established churches with churches abroad: the thought that the ecumenical co-operation includes friendly relations with the Free Churches in one's own land has been slow in emerging.

In America, on the other hand, interchurch co-operation and world perspectives have been closely linked from the beginning. Long before the founding of missions and socially minded co-operative societies, Cotton Mather and August Hermann Franke agreed in their correspondence that these two dimensions jointly heralded the opening of a New Age in the history of the faith. Uniting as Protestant state-church men, but at the beginning of Pietist ecumenical and missionary contributions, the two great churchmen were convinced that the eternal gospel was flowering in a new and wonderful way in their own times. Its spread would be marked by (1) the bringing of the yet untouched peoples and tribes of the earth to the feet of the cross and (2) the reunion of the Protestant churches, divided by national and cultural forces in Europe, on the North American continent.[5] As H. Richard Niebuhr has demonstrated so conclusively, the forces of European Christendom (chiefly non-theological) continued for long to determine the dividedness of American Protestantism.[6] But where American Protestantism has been true to its genius, has devoted its energies to evangelism and missions and other expressions of church-wide initiative, the trend to co-operation has been pronounced.

As paradoxical as it sounds, the drive to missionize and reach new and untouched peoples has produced co-operation: contentment with static culture-religion has gone hand-in-hand with acceptance of dividedness as normal or even desirable. As Kenneth Scott Latourette has made a part of our thinking, "The Great Century" was the age of expansion, of lay Christianity, and of growing co-operation in missions.[7] W. Richey Hogg has shown us how the twentieth century ecumenical movement is indebted to this motif of missions,[8] and Timothy L. Smith, in his very significant *Revivalism and Social Reform,* has shown us how mass evangelism and home missions also produced inter-church co-operation in America.

Lay leadership, the drive toward interdenominational fellowship, the primacy of ethics over dogma, and the democratization of Calvinism

[4] Ehrenstrom, Nils, "Report and Recommendations on Project E 65072 (24); Ecumenical Religious Cooperation in Relation to International Problems"; MSS submitted to Religious Affairs Branch/OMGUS (January 13, 1951), p. 16.

[5] Benz, Ernst, "The Pietist and Puritan Sources of Early Protestant World Missions (Cotton Mather and A. H. Francke)," XX Church History (1951) 2:28-55.

[6] Niebuhr, H. Richard, *The Social Sources of Denominationalism* (New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1924).

[7] Latourette, Kenneth Scott, *A History of the Expansion of Christianity* (N. Y. and London: Harper & Bros., 1937-45), vols. IV-VI.

[8] Hogg, W. Richey, *Ecumenical Foundations* (New York: Harper & Bros., 1952).

were more nearly fruits of fervor than of reflection.[9]

Perhaps a chief difference between ecumenics on the world map and in the USA derives from the fact that missionary co-operation predominated in the background to the World Council, and co-operation in the field of social service and action in the background to the old Federal Council. In either sphere it is the assertion of the Lordship of Jesus Christ which unites, lack of faith and hope which divides.

What is the Uniqueness of Religion in America?

By way of further paradox, I would urge that the chief thinking contribution of Christians in the USA to the ecumenical fellowship can only be made when we shall be more conscious of our peculiar history and possibilities. We need far more courses in American Church History, in the study of Roman Catholicism and Judaism as component elements in American society and civilization. For more than half our history American church life was patterned on the style of European Christendom. It is customary to overlook this fact, and to exaggerate the significance of unique personalities such as Roger Williams and William Penn—who both understood that that service only is pleasing to God which is voluntary and uncoerced. The achievement of religious liberty is thus read back into the past, and its achievement is dated with the first Amendment to the Federal Constitution. But this is to rewrite history to serve later value judgments. As a matter of fact, we have never had "separation of church and state" in this country. State establishments continued in varying degrees into the 19th century. Not until 1926 did the US Supreme Court determine that those rights guaranteed to the citizens by the first ten Amendments limiting the power of the federal government were also protected—under the 14th Amendment—from abuses by state governments. Until that time it was theoretically possible for a state to maintain a state church and, as a matter of fact, many of them have over the years given financial aid and co-operation to the major Protestant churches. Famous constitutional authorities of the last century such as Chancellor Kent and Joseph Story declared without challenge that America was a Protestant country and Christianity was part of the Common Law of the Land. Over and over again, right through the Anti-Evolution Laws of the 1920's, American Protestants have met special crises by reverting to the practices of state-churches. This was the rule in the Bureau of Indian Affairs, in the history of the Freedman's Bureau and the education of the Negro. (Both federal and state monies are still being appropriated annually for Negro theological education). It was the rule in the chaplaincies of state colleges and universities for decades and only recently have inter-religious coordinators—working with Protestants, Catholics, and Jews alike—begun to replace Protestant chaplains or YMCA secretaries.

In the great center of American Protestant society, the Southeast, the old history can still be read plainly. The chaplain of the University of South Carolina is still a Protestant clergyman, and attendance at services was required of students until the end of World War II. How many state and public institutions, especially in the old thirteen states, still maintain a modified establishment? The policies followed in the military chaplaincy and in military government are those of a pluralistic establishment. Contrary to the dogmatic position of certain scholastics, we have never had a "wall of separation" in this country and religious liberty is a goal yet to be obtained. We need a new perspective on our church history, one in which American church life

[9] Smith, Timothy L., *Revivalism and Social Reform* (New York and Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1957), p. 8.

is not a footnote to European Christendom but rather emerging dynamically out of it into a new pattern.

The Claims of the Universal Church vs. Tribal Religion

One might say that our present struggle is precisely to establish the authority of the claims the Universal Church makes upon us. The origin of religious liberty lay in the church's will to be obedient, not in some view of its desirability from a political point of view. Those who first defended it—among the Anabaptists and the radical Puritans—did so in asserting the crown rights of Jesus Christ, the Head of the Church. Is not this the very issue still confronting American Protestant churches where the battle wages most fiercely? Isn't American nativism, in 1960 as in 1842, a religion which substitutes tribal religion for the catholic faith? What is racialism in the churches but the surrendering of New Testament standards to the pressures of the unbaptized society and its leaders, who patronize Christianity as they patronize the movies and "Louie's"? What are most of the professional Laymen's Unions which attack the National Council, the General Assembly or the General Conference, but the tools of political and economic forces which demand that their position of leadership in the world shall give them the right to dictate to the church? What is at stake here but the old issue of religious liberty, of resistance to the presumption of patronage? A few years ago a study of Methodist churches in the southeastern textile area revealed that three-fifths of them had their stewards and officers appointed directly by the superintendent of the mills, in violation of church law, and over half were using the "check off" system to deduct contributions from the men's pay checks. In a large number, over half of the annual budget was subscribed directly by the mills. This year one of our bishops was hunting on a 4000 acre preserve in the Carolinas, on invitation of a mill owner. The proprietor showed him with pride a beautiful little Methodist church he had built for the use of people in the area. Asked the friendly bishop, "Oh, do you go there? Do you and Mrs. ———— belong to it?" Answer: "Belong to it! H--l, Bishop, it belongs to me!"

This is the real status of many of the white Protestant churches in the Southeast. Our primary trouble is not with the Sunday school teachers, the lay people who attend and serve and bear the heat of the day. Our trouble is with a pattern of patronage which expects that of course the churches will uphold "our way of life." Our trouble is with what Riesmann calls "the leader from the outside." To him there can be but one answer: worldly status, patronage and proprietorship stop at the door of the church. In this realm Christ is Head and the Holy Spirit is Governor. The church is not beholden to some particularistic or parochial social pattern: it is representative of (*Stellvertretend für*) the claims of the Universal Church. There are those who feel that the race issue is the over-riding moral crisis in America. In terms of representative government and constitutional liberties, of order vs. anarchy, this may well be true. But for our churches there is a prior issue, yet unresolved. And that is the question whether we are to enjoy the glorious freedom of Christian obedience or whether we are to be enslaved by our own anxieties and ambitions. Put bluntly—are we churches at all in the biblical sense? This is the primary "ecumenical issue" before us.

The issue before the Protestant churches where they are dominant is not race but religious liberty. And, as Roy Wilkins of the NAACP said in New York just yesterday,[10] the fight against American tribal religion of Protestant background unites those who oppose racialism with those who despise religious bigotry. America no longer

[10] *The New York Times* (9/7/60), p. 34.

numbers 4½ millions, of whom only 20,000 are Catholics and 6000 are Jews. Negro Americans are no longer content to eat the crumbs that fall from the children's tables. How are the once dominant Protestant churches responding to this situation—with joy and confidence in God's purposes, or with a sullen and resentful nativism?—as Free Churches, or as culture-religion?

Contrary to the mutterings of the Protestant underground, the worst threat to a frank acceptance of a pattern of voluntaryism and pluralism—with all of its implications—does not come from a candidate of Catholic preference who has been nominated for the presidency. It comes from a resentful Protestantism which, instead of moving out into free competition with a universal message for men's minds and souls, is bitterly determined to try to hang on to its former position of social and cultural and political dominance by cultivating anti-Catholicism, anti-Semitism, racialism and nativism generally. Are the Protestant clergymen who circulate the forged "Protocols of the Elders of Zion" and the false "Oath of the Knights of Columbus" aware that they are betraying the genius of an evangelical and missionary faith as well as bearing false witness against their neighbors? Are the Baptists and Disciples and Methodists who fight so bitterly against bus fares and textbooks and scholarships for scholars in church schools willing to face the fact that there is scarcely a Protestant hospital or university in this country which could survive six months without massive grants from agencies of the Federal Government? It seems to me that the time has come to throw away some of the shibboleths which we Protestants have mouthed so automatically to our own advantage and face the true nature of the religious scene in the USA!

Hope in Things to Come

It is time that we appropriate and realize on the vision of that prince of church historians and ecumenical partisans, Philip Schaff, who over a century ago discussed the problems and possibilities of the faith in America in terms of the Christian hope of the future. For it is the eschatological dimension which above all gives meaning to history—not the reading of a "Book of Nature" or a "Book of History," but a view of the future. Reflecting on his own "borderline" experience between European Christendom and American church life, Schaff wrote:

> America will no doubt produce, in due time, a classical theology of its own, that shall rise superior to the sectional and denominational schools, which so far have mostly prevailed amongst us, and be truly catholic in spirit, and influence.[11]

He greeted with enthusiasm the qualities of voluntaryism and lay responsibility which were emerging, both fairly unknown in a static Christendom ruled by secular governments and professional theologians.

> The glory of America is a free Christianity, independent of the secular government, and supported by the voluntary contributions of a free people. This is one of the greatest facts in modern history.[12]

Speaking in the last year of his life, in the same season as his famous address on "The Reunion of Christendom" at the World's Parliament of Religions (Chicago, 1893), he addressed his home church (The Eastern Synod of the Reformed Church) with a voice of hope:

> The Reformation of the sixteenth century is by no means the last word which God has spoken to His people. He has other and greater Pentecosts in store. By His providence all nationalities and creeds are brought together in this land of freedom, of which the Reformers could not dream. Here is the material, the possibility and opportunity for a settlement of the controversies of Christendom. . . . If Chris-

[11] Schaff, Philip, *Germany; its Universities, Theology, and Religion* . . . (Philadelphia and New York: Lindsay and Blakiston/Sheldon, Blakeman and Co., 1857), p. 8.

[12] *Ibid.*, p. 105.

> tians are ever to be united, they must be united in Christ, their living head and the source of their spiritual life.[13]

If our students are led to understand the direction toward which all history moves and to carry on the dialogue with the past and with those of other heritages who yet live, we shall be fulfilling our obligation as masters and friends. It is our primary obligation to help them to perceive the meaning of the "fullness of time," the here and now; to think Christianly; to out-think the opposition. To do this we must abandon the protectionist stance and view boldly the alternatives to faith. It is amazing that, with all the emphasis upon the Early Church which has characterized the Left Wing of the Reformation—so important for American Protestantism!—so little attention is directed to the fact that in the sub-Apostolic age the Christians not only out-suffered and out-lasted the opposition but also out-thought it! In that period the fathers took on and dealt satisfactorily, for the time, with all of the alternative faiths and frames of being: the mystery religions, the classical philosophies, Manichaeism, Gnosticism, Montanism. How far have we come in the parallel responsibility today? How many of our students can discuss with a logical positivist? Are not certain recurring Gnostic themes walking virtually unchallenged in the American churches? Are they not, to speak bluntly, powerfully lodged in certain seminaries? How do we face the challenge of missionary Buddhism and Islam and their growing followings in the USA? Are our students schooled to out-think and out-point dialectical materialism?—or is our approach to the encounter with Communism chiefly homiletic? How many of our seminaries have at least a single seminar on Marxism, assuredly the most significant "high religious" challenge in twelve centuries? For that matter, have we really come to grips with the theological significance of Nazism—the subject of assiduous study by theologians in "post-Christian" Europe? Would we have the present popular identification of Christianity with "the American way of life" or "the Southern way of life" if our pastors, let alone the lay people, understood how fellow-travelers with Nazism used the concept "the German way of life" (*das deutsche Volkswesen*)? Just a week ago, in announcing the purchase of land for a new Christian college near Dallas the committee of the Evangelical Methodist Church told the newspapers its purpose would be to emphasize Bible study and "the American way of life!"[14]

We need, in short, a new burst of faith in what God can do with churches which are not fearful, but faithful. For the freedom of a Christian is *obedience*! I would like to suggest that, in our situation and with our responsibilities, this means taking both Catholicism and Judaism far more seriously than we habitually have, in repeating faithfully the conclusions of the 16th century state-church Reformers. Are we really prepared to maintain that the providence of God was ended for the Jews with the dispersion and the Catholics with the court of Alexander VI? What shall we say to the brilliant American author and editor, Arthur Cohen? Let me read an excerpt from his statement of faith in the *Harper's Magazine* series last year:

> I have decided to embrace Judaism. I have not done so out of loyalty to the Jewish people or the Jewish state. My choice was religious. I chose to believe in the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; to acknowledge the law of Moses as the Word of God; to accept the people of Israel as the holy instrument of divine fulfillment; to await the coming of the Messiah and the redemption of history.[15]

[13] Schaff, David A., *The Life of Philip Schaff* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1897), quotation on pp. 472-73.

[14] *Dallas Morning News* (9/2/60), Section 4, p. 5.

[15] Cohen, Arthur A., "Why I Chose to be a Jew," 218 *Harper's Magazine* (1959) 1307: 61-66, 67.

(Significantly enough, in this series the Roman Catholic statement was fine, the Jewish excellent, the Protestant intellectually feeble and spiritually impoverished.) For my part, I will say unashamedly that I count myself closer to the professed Jew, Arthur Cohen, than to Methodists whose affiliation is a result of spiritual lethargy and intellectual laziness. How sadly we need more Methodists who serve the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob! Even though we know well the difference between the ecumenical and inter-religious settings, as we do, can we who affirm the dialogue take any other position?

To sum up: The USA has become the center of Protestant, Roman Catholic, and Jewish cultures. We live in a "post-Protestant era"—not as in Europe, in a "post-Christian era"—although many Protestants are trying desperately to hold back the tides. More people are attending church and supporting religious institutions than ever before in history. This membership and attendance has resulted from a century and a half of mass evangelism, a stress which has been the major formative force in American church life, during a period which has seen voluntaryism and pluralism emerge as the chief marks of our religious situation. In this situation we need a new birth of the disciplines of discipleship, one of the chief of which is intellectual; this is our particular area of vocation. If our view of the future is sound and our faith in the God who keeps his promises is secure, then we will show it by casting aside the protectionist mood of denominational culture religion, by engaging joyfully in the dialogues with our friends and the encounters with our enemies which we have been given in this year of our Lord, 1960, in this good land which we have been given for an heritage.

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should all be called upon to appreciate the same thing? And no apology is made, except to wonder why so many of us are addicted to current streams in theological and biblical thought, but insist that our art images shall come from the nineteenth century?

Jim McLean, who has done all of the art work on this issue, combines both theological insight and artistic competence. He is a graduate of Perkins and while serving as pastor of the St. Claude Heights Methodist Church in Arabi, Louisiana, he also is in the graduate arts program, and doing some instructing, at Tulane University.

—R. O.

James M. Ward

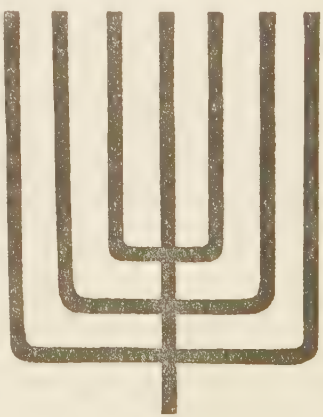
The Origin of Israel's Faith

One of the prevailing theses in current discussion of Old Testament theology is that Israel's conception of God was inferred from the crucial events of her history, which were thus interpreted as the mighty acts of Yahweh. G. E. Wright's *God Who Acts: Biblical Theology as Recital*[1] is the most exhaustive attempt to demonstrate this hypothesis, though it has had a deep influence upon the works of others as well.[2] Wright contends that Israel's unique view of God was derived from her unique view of history and that the latter, which is "the primary, irreducible datum of Biblical theology,"[3] arose as the only possible explanation of the events which led to the establishment of the nation. We are therefore to seek the source of her faith in God, indeed her conception of God, in the events of her history.

I believe that this cannot be done. And the task of this article is to show that the biblical evidence does not support the hypothesis.

If one holds that Israel's history is revelatory, he can assert either that all events of her history are so, or that only certain events are. Both viewpoints seem to be found in the Bible. Note, as an illustration of the first, the effort in I Samuel to view all the events of Samuel's, Saul's, and David's lives as acts of God, and, therefore, presumably revelatory to the man of faith. Every experience is a divine judgment, either guidance toward right action or punishment for wrong. Saul's death, the climatic event of the book, is one such divine action (cf. I Sam. 28: 16-19). But the interpretation of this "act of God" by the writer of I Samuel is a good illustration of the impossibility of taking all history as simply a revelation of God. The writer (better, one of the writers) states that God rejected Saul and sided with his enemies because Saul was faithless in the performance of his vow to God, refusing to slay Agag the Amalekite (I Sam. 15: 17-30). God's action in destroying Saul would thus be seen as a revelation of the holy wrath of God.

Now it is difficult to see the destruction of Saul as a manifestation of wrath, if by this we mean the psychological and historical processes that annihilate men in spite of their own best efforts to survive. Any historian can see the role played in Saul's demise by his own insanity and the enormity of the task of fashioning a stable and united monarchy out of the limited resources of the tribal confederacy against powerful Philistine opposition. But the biblical writer sees here not only wrath as a socio-psychological process, but wrath as an act of God,



[1] Studies in Biblical Theology No. 8. Henry Regnery, 1952.

[2] See, for example, the now widely used textbooks *Understanding the Old Testament* by B. W. Anderson (Prentice-Hall, 1957), especially pages 1-15, 37, 57-59, and *A History of Israel* by John Bright (Westminster Press, 1959), especially p. 132.

[3] *Op. cit.*, p. 42.

as a punishment for Saul's sin. We are not easily persuaded, however, by his effort to interpret the king's death as a punishment for the Agag incident. Left to ourselves with the uninterpreted record of Saul's deeds, we would never conclude that the Agag incident and the death of Saul belonged together as, in some sense, cause and effect, or that they demonstrated the presence within the series of events of a supra-historical God. The writer has not made this inference either. He has interpreted Saul's death on the basis of a prior belief in a historically active God; and he has related the Agag incident to it because he believed not merely in God, but in a righteous God. The king's death could not therefore be a capricious act of the Deity but had to be explained as punishment for sin. So, if he hadn't found Agag, the writer would have been forced by his own theory to find some other deed of Saul's that would justify God's destroying him. We are forced to conclude that the history of Saul was not the source of the writer's conviction about God's activity, but that the writer's faith has led him to interpret the events in a particular, and not inevitable, way.

This is only one illustration of the way in which Israel's faith shaped her understanding and reporting of events. The entire Deuteronomic history (especially Joshua, Judges, and Kings) is another. If ever there were didactic historiography, selecting and interpreting on the basis of a prior theology, this is it. So, if we are to derive Israel's theology from historical events it will have to be *certain* events and not any and all events. All Old Testament historians are aware of this fact, of course. How else could one account for Ecclesiastes and Job, if all history had been so simply revelatory to ancient Israel? In order to account for the theology of history that we find in the so-called historical books of the Old Testament we cannot look only to the events that they report, but must go to other sources. A previous generation turned first to the literary prophets' inspiration as the source of Israel's theology, and read the Pentateuch as a later reflection of the prophetic faith, projected back into Mosaic and Patriarchal times. Today the scholars usually turn first to the Pentateuch for knowledge of the events that shaped Israel's faith, and read the prophets as preservers rather than innovators.

It is not to the Priestly framework of the Pentateuch that one can turn, of course, for this is still regarded by most scholars as a post-exilic source, nor even to the Yahwist and Elohist, but rather to the liturgical formulae ("credos") that are embedded in the larger sources. The form-critical studies of the German scholars Von Rad and Noth have led most biblical historians to regard these credos as pre-monarchical confessions employed in the rites of the tribal confederacy and, therefore, as among the earliest witnesses to the faith of Israel during its formative era. The other early witnesses are the ancient hymns in the Pentateuch and Judges (Exodus 15, Deuteronomy 32, 33, Judges 5). The God who is confessed in these materials is the One who acted in the deliverance of the slaves from Egypt, the guidance of the tribes in the wilderness, and the gift of the land of Canaan in fulfilment of the promises to the fathers. These three themes can immediately be seen to form the skeleton of the Pentateuch. Add the patriarchs themselves as a preparation for the exodus and the Sinai tradition as a special form of the wilderness theme, fill out the whole with the poems, tales, legends, and laws that were preserved in the oral traditions of the tribes, and you have the present Yahwist-Elohist source. The recital of these events as acts of God was obviously crucial in the pre-monarchical religion and is now widely heralded as the key to our theological problem of the relationship between history and the knowledge of God.

Closer analysis of the themes of the Pentateuchal credos reveals that we really have to do with just two "events," the

exodus and the conquest. The patriarchal theme is prefatory to the exodus and the patriarchal stories are manifestly shaped by the "exodus-faith." The wilderness wanderings are an inseparable aspect of the exodus event, for the event itself can only be described in terms of what was before (slavery in Egypt) and what came after (covenant in the wilderness). It is most significant that the pre-exilic prophets never allude to a covenant with the patriarchs and rarely refer to them at all, and that they are quite unaware of a Sinai event as distinct from the exodus proper.[4] Their testimony therefore agrees completely with the earliest credos in focusing attention almost exclusively on the exodus event as *the* redemptive and revelatory act of God.

The conquest poses a special problem. The transition of the tribes from semi-nomadic life to settled, agrarian existence in Palestine, whether sudden or gradual, can be defined as an "event." This event is an important part of the history of salvation in the promises to the fathers in Genesis as well as in Joshua. One might conclude, therefore, that the "gift" of the land was an act of God revealing his redemptive purpose. The trouble with such a conclusion, however, is that there is so much biblical testimony against it. The prophets are unanimous in regarding what happened in the settlement as a curse upon Israel and a profanation of God's covenant. What Israel learned from this "event" was not the knowledge of God, but the sentimentality of baalism, the self-exaltation of a semi-magical ritualism, the injustices of stratified society, and the militarism and national pride of an ambitious, imperial establishment. It may be true that the conquest of Palestine and its aftermath was regarded by *the Yahwist* as the denouement of God's saving work and that he carried the story of salvation up to the period of the Judges or even the kingdom of David. But the later circles of tradition agreed with the prophets in their estimate of the settlement and the monarchy. The Deuteronomic history, which assumed that the exodus-wilderness (Sinai) period was the *one* definitive point of divine revelation, regarded the history of the settlement and monarchy, especially the northern kingdom but also the epoch of the judges and even the kingdom of Judah, as one of persistent evil. The narrative closes at the end of II Kings with no indication that the writer(s) expected or desired a restoration of the monarchy and a return to the land of Canaan. The conquest stands in this history (Deuteronomy to II Kings) not as the climax of the story of revelation, but as the beginning of the story of apostasy following the revelation.

The Priestly editors of the Pentateuch develop a four-stage theory of revelation built around the "events" of creation, the flood, Abraham's migration, and the exodus, issuing in the covenant of Sinai and the giving of the law. What follows does not stand in the history of revelation. Of these four revelation-linked events, only the exodus is clearly what we can consider an historical event, though the migration of Abraham might be so considered. The Elohist tradition in Joshua 24 locates the beginning of the history of revelation in the call of Abraham, though it too centers attention on the exodus and the call of Moses (Exod. 3).

What then are the "mighty acts of God," the objective historical events from which Israel is supposed to have derived its conception of history and its conception of God? There is only one, according to the biblical testimony, namely the exodus (which we would define as the transition from polytheistic nomadism and Egyptian slavery to covenantal confederacy based on faith in Yahweh). What we really have is the mighty *act* of God. To be sure, Israel

[4] The prophetic allusions to Israel's history are all conveniently listed and discussed in C. R. North, *The Old Testament Interpretation of History* (London: Epworth, 1946).

interpreted the rest of history, beforehand and afterward, as the scene of God's judging and redeeming activity and man's proper religious concern. Israelite theology does indeed distinguish itself in this respect from all of the a-historical mythologies and philosophies. But Israel did not derive its conception of history or of God from subsequent historical experience. She interpreted that experience in the light of conceptions with which she was already armed in the days of the tribal confederacy.

Can those conceptions, then, be explained as inferences from the exodus event? I believe they cannot. What happened in the exodus event is as much a product of the Israelite conception of God as it is the source of the latter. Had Israel not been disposed to see the hand of Yahweh in the event, i.e., if she had not already had a conception of a God active in history, she would not in fact have seen it there. The objective happening of the exodus escape from Egypt does not of itself *demand* a providential interpretation any more than the migrations of the motley Hebrew tribes and the conquest of Palestine. The instinct of self-preservation, the lure of the sown land of Canaan, and a measure of good luck (historical accident) will account for these events perfectly well. The fact that ancient people *did* not so account for their fortunes, but viewed them as manifestations of divine wills and powers is irrelevant to the present discussion, for to use this fact in the argument would be simply to say that Israel like all of the peoples of ancient times viewed natural and socio-psychological powers as divine. Since these powers are many, the logical inference from them, as well as the inference that was actually made all over the ancient world, was polytheism. Other ancient peoples besides Israel saw the hands of their national gods in the affairs of their lives too. Why didn't their historical experiences, including successes against other national powers (even Israel's deliverance from oppression was not unique by any means in ancient times), lead them to infer a concept of history and a concept of God like Israel's? We don't know why they didn't; that is an inexplicable mystery. But we also don't know why Israel did. *Something* operated in Israel to lead them to one conclusion and everyone else to another. But that something was not a happening or happenings in "objective" history. The happenings in Israel's history were objectively typical of such happenings in all peoples experiences. But we cannot derive a unique conception of God from typical happenings.

The issue is not solved by saying that Israel's particular set of happenings was unique and not typical, and that they demanded a unique God to explain them. The whole *set* of happenings was unique, to be sure, but then so was Moab's set and Edom's and Aram's. And each of these peoples had its own god to go with its own unique set of experiences. But Israel's God was not unique only in the sense that these gods were, each having with its devotees its own peculiar set of failures and accomplishments. Yahweh was of an altogether different kind. He transcended his people and their set of experiences. He comprehended within his power all the other powers of nature and history. He was unique not in the sense that he had his own life-history, but in the sense that he was One and in the sense that he was the Only One. The conception of the unity and the transcendence of God cannot be derived from the particularities of Israel's history any more than the personalness of God can be derived from the observation of nature. Historical particularities produce national gods and observation of nature produces natural gods; neither produces the Israelite notion of God. It is simply illogical to infer the transcendent One who is necessary from the immanent many that are contingent. And, since most men are logical, ancient men did not usually make this inference. The Greek philosophers looked for the one behind the many, but they were as eccentric in this regard as was

Israel. *Why* they looked for the One is inexplicable of course. That too is a mystery. Nothing in their historical experience can account for their making this logically unnecessary assumption, which observation of the world tends to prove positively unreasonable. When they were done with their reflections, their One was, of course, a far cry from the loving, leading, judging, redeeming God of Israel, which fact merely points to the double mystery of Israel's belief in a God who was both transcendent *and* personal.

So we have no external control, either in logic or in the history of other religions, to give cogency to the assertion that Israel derived its conception of God and of history from the objective events of her history. Such a lack doesn't *prove* that her faith *was not* so derived; it simply makes it unlikely. To make such a hypothesis anything more than a speculative theory of modern biblical historiography we must have evidence to support it. The Old Testament is our only source of such evidence. Archaeology cannot by its very nature throw *any* light on this problem. It can throw some light on the externals of Israel's history and cultus but can tell us nothing about her conception of history and its bearing upon her conception of God.

Does the Old Testament support the theory? It does not; on the contrary it denies it. The Pentateuch presents the view that God was known before the exodus, the only event which our above analysis will allow us to use in defense of the theory and the only one which in fact the defenders of the theory use. God was known before the exodus both by Moses and by the fathers. Not only is this the testimony of the text; it is also the overwhelming historical probability. Without Moses' (and/or someone else's) faith in Yahweh the exodus would never have occurred let alone have been interpreted retrospectively as a divine act. Without the people's previous common faith in a providential, tribal god (or gods), they would not have followed Moses nor would they have been able even retrospectively to see a purpose in what happened. That the main narrative of the Pentateuch in all its strands (Yahwist, Elohist, Priestly) assumes that God was known prior to the exodus is so clear as to require no further discussion. The sources differ in their presentation of the history of the divine name; but none of them indicates that the conception of God was derived from the exodus event.

The present sources of the Pentateuchal narrative are written from the point of view of the post-Mosaic, post-exodus faith, of course. And therefore *their theory* that the God of the exodus was also the God of the fathers and of Moses prior to the exodus does not prove that those who participated in the exodus thought so. But what sources indicate that they did not so believe? We may not wish to accept the theory of these sources but we ought to have evidence to support our own. Note, by the way, that their theory is not only that Yahweh the God of the exodus *was* the God of Moses and the fathers but that they *knew* this to be the case prior to the exodus (so Exodus 3 [E] and Exodus 6 [P], not to mention Genesis 5:26 [J]).

The case is the same with the ancient credos. None of them provides grounds for holding that Israel's earliest conception of God or history was derived from the exodus experience. Deuteronomy 27:7 says that the Israelites "cried to Yahweh the God of our fathers" while they were yet in Egypt. Joshua 24 comes closest to asserting that Israel acknowledged a transcendent yet historically active God only after the exodus, but it does not actually say that. It states explicitly that the Hebrews *in Egypt* cried to Yahweh for deliverance (v. 7), and it implies that the patriarchal period was the point of transition between Yahwism and polytheism (v. 2ff.).

I am not trying to prove that the personal religious experiences of Moses (or any other prophet) was the *source* of Israel's

conception of God and history. This is the theory which the Old Testament theologians are now at pains to refute. To derive Israelite theology (either the idea of God or the idea of history) from subjective "events" of prophetic psychology or the rational speculations of Israelite wisemen is as disastrous an enterprise as the effort to derive it from the objective events of history. "Religious experiences," unless they come to persons who stand within a community that already believes in a transcendent God who is actively present in social history, do not conduce to such conceptions of God. Quite the contrary, as the history of mysticism proves. At this point, I have no argument with the new theory. On the other hand, I am unwilling simply to derive the Old Testament idea of God from the tribal god(s) of the fathers. They contributed a great deal, especially the notion of the personal, social relatedness of God to man. But other nomadic, Semitic tribes had gods like those of the patriarchs and *they* didn't come to believe in a transcendent God who yet had historical purposes.

We are not much better off to say that the objective event in conjunction with the prophetic inspiration produced the revelation, if by this we mean that one followed the other. If the exodus event as an objective happening followed Moses' "inspiration" (the burning bush), as the Old Testament narrative indicates, we must then go behind Moses' experience to some prior event(s) to account for his interpretation of what or who it was that inspired him. And what prophet interpreted that (those) prior events so that they could be revelatory? Abraham perhaps? To say yes here is merely to move the inquiry back another step chronologically. We are no closer to a solution. To say that the objective happening came first and was retrospectively interpreted by an inspired prophet is to say that the prophet received an impulse from some *unknown source* (remember that we can't, according to the theory, posit God yet) to view the happening as revelatory.

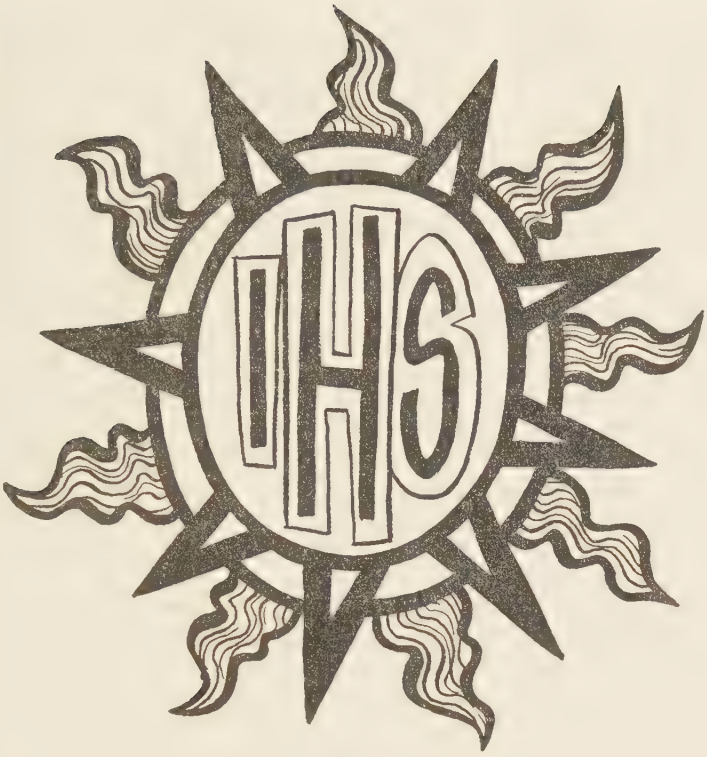
There is only one way out. That way is to say that the prophetic inspiration presupposes the historical experience of the people and that the historical experience presupposes the prophetic faith, or again, the idea of God presupposes the historical events and the historical events presuppose the idea of God. Israel would not have interpreted her exodus-wilderness experience as revelatory of a personal yet transcendent God who acts in history unless she was already disposed to believe in such a God. She would not have been disposed to believe in such a God if she had not had this historical experience. In other words there is no way out of the mystery. Israel had no history before she had faith in Yahweh; for Israel is by definition the people of Yahweh (no other linguistic, ethnic, economic, political factors are essential and therefore none can "explain" Israel). Yet at no time did she have faith that was unrelated to her history as the locus of her relationship to her God.

We must, therefore, not define the exodus-wilderness "event" as an objective happening in history that somehow gave rise to a conception of history and an idea of God. Neither, on the other hand, can we define the event as a subjective or intellectual one, i.e., as the "emergence of the belief in Yahweh," independent of external happenings, the latter being explained as the imaginative externalization in concrete symbols of what was an inward experience. One might, hypothetically, argue that the events recited in the credos did not happen, but that the narrative was merely Israel's way of describing her transition from natural polytheism to historical Yahwism. The whole of the Pentateuch then would be viewed as a kind of historical myth projected from faith but having no relationship to the outward course of history. This view is also inadequate (though if I had to choose

between this one and the alternative one that Israel's faith was an inference from the objective happenings of her history, I would prefer the former theory as historically more probable). Whether we use the ancient credos or the prophetic allusions to the past, we find that Israel *at the very beginning* is already the people of Yahweh who understand history in the light of their belief in him and who believe in him as the God of history.

There is therefore no historical way of explaining the origin of the Israelite conception of God (or of history) any more than there is a philosophical way. That Israel *expressed* her faith in a recital of the acts of God in history rather than in a philosophical treatise is an important indication of the nature of her mentality. It does not, however, provide the means by which to explain the *origin* of her faith. Nor does it make faith in God any more reasonable to modern man. To assert that Israel's faith was a result of the exodus event is in fact a tautology, for the exodus *was* the emergence of her faith as well as the outward transition from slavery to confederacy.

The Old Testament historical theologians have contributed enormously in recent decades to our knowledge of Israel's faith. They have not, however, provided a new way out of the theological circle, or, for apologetic purposes, a way from the outside in. The only way, now as always, is the venture of faith.



Victor Paul Furnish

Kerygma and Didache Reconsidered

Preaching is one important point at which contemporary theological interests and insights bear directly and decisively upon the life and work of the church. It is most of all in the sermon that the minister is called upon to articulate, at least indirectly, a basic theological orientation and method. Every "history of Christian doctrine" is at the same time a history of Christian preaching; and a study of the church's *preaching* ministry throughout its history would yield valuable clues as to the shape and development of its theology.

In the mainstream of contemporary Protestantism two key words descriptive of both theology and preaching are "biblical" and "kerygmatic." It is outside the scope of the present article to discuss the reasons for this current emphasis, but the fact of it is clear enough. The appeal of every major Protestant theologian today is, in one way or another, to the Bible; and hand-in-hand with this exegetical theology has gone an increasing emphasis upon biblical preaching. But the return to the Bible in the current theological generation has had special results. The Bible as a book for theologizing and for preaching is being studied less for its prooftexts and for its exciting sermon illustrations, than for the funda-

mental insights it contains with respect to the meaning of man's life before God, in the world. The "rediscovery of the Bible" about which we are hearing and reading so much is actually a re-evaluation of the meaning and scope of the biblical witness, and a re-appropriation of the gospel it preaches.

This brings us to the second word descriptive of present-day theology and preaching: *kerygmatic*. It is the biblical *kerygma*, we say, which is being newly discovered; it is the *kerygma* which should be the subject of our theologizing and the content of our preaching. The prominence which this word "kerygma" has so swiftly gained in current theological parlance fully confirms the dictum of the Latin poet, Horace: *New words and lately made shall credit claim/If from a Grecian source they gently stream*! *Kerygma* is, in fact, a Greek word which in our English New Testament is almost always translated "preaching." Strictly speaking, then, it is an impossible redundancy to talk about "kerygmatic preaching."

That the phrase "kerygmatic preaching" *is* used, however, is due in no small part to the writings of the British New Testament scholar, C. H. Dodd. In 1936 Dodd published a now classic series of lectures under the title, *The Apostolic Preaching and Its Developments*.[1] The first lecture opens with the assertion that "the New Testament writers draw a clear distinction between preaching and teaching."[2] For Dodd this distinction corresponds to that between "theology" and "ethics," or "gospel" and "law." In contrast, then, to the *kerygma*, he speaks about the church's *didache*, the Greek word for "teaching." "For the earliest church," he claims, "to preach the Gospel was *by no means the same thing* as to deliver moral instruction or exhortation."[3] Subsequently Dodd preceeds to spell out the content of the New Testament gospel (*kerygma*) as he discovers it primarily in Acts, the Pauline letters, and the gospels.

Dodd discovers six theological propositions which together constitute the New Testament *kerygma*: (1) the age of fulfilment has dawned . . . (2) through the ministry, death, and resurrection of Jesus . . . (3) whom God has exalted to his own right hand as Messiah; (4) the Holy Spirit in the church is the sign of Christ's present power and glory; (5) the Messianic Age will shortly reach its consummation in the return of Christ; and (6) for those who repent there is the offer of forgiveness, the Holy Spirit, and life in the coming age.[4]

This little book, along with a later one in which Dodd has developed his thesis more fully, has had an enormous influence upon English-speaking readers.[5] For one thing it has helped to rescue contemporary preaching from preoccupation with the trivial and the trite, and has recalled us to the fundamental concerns of the gospel we are to preach. Dodd's observations have been and continue to serve as a valuable corrective in those circles where Christian preaching has degenerated into moralistic conversations about "Christian manners," or weakly Christianized inspirational addresses. He has confronted us with the great themes of the earliest Christian preaching.

On the other hand, there are two basic points at which Dodd's work needs seriously to be questioned. First, it is highly doubtful

[1] London: Hodder & Stoughton, Ltd.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 7.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 8. Italics mine.
[4] *Ibid.*, especially pp. 21-24.
[5] Besides the volume already mentioned, see his *Gospel and Law, The Relation of Faith and Ethics in Early Christianity* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1951). Actually, the major aspects of Dodd's thesis had been articulated earlier by the German scholar, Martin Dibelius, in various commentaries and articles, unfortunately still untranslated. Appearing in the same year as Dodd's *Apostolic Preaching* was the English translation of one of Dibelius' books which does include several sections dealing with the same and related issues, *A Fresh Approach to the New Testament and Early Christian Literature* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1936).

whether his six-fold summary of "the *kerygma*" can be held as representative of the *entire* New Testament. Dodd thinks it can be, and defines the unity of New Testament theology in terms of this common kerygmatic pattern. But the result is a highly schematic presentation of what is an exceedingly varied New Testament witness. That some such pattern can be found in Acts is quite clear, and it is equally true that certain motifs in other sections of the New Testament accord with some parts of it; but this is far from demonstrating that the pattern *as a pattern* is characteristic of the whole New Testament, and thus of the apostolic preaching.

There is a second and even more basic question to be raised. Can Dodd's sharp distinction between *kerygma* and *didache* be substantiated on the basis of the New Testament materials themselves? Is there, indeed, the discontinuity between "theology" and "ethics" in the church's earliest preaching which his thesis suggests? If these questions are posed with respect to our earliest New Testament materials, the Pauline letters, both will have to be answered negatively.

I

In the first place, Dodd's use of the terms "*kerygma*" and "*didache*," when measured by Paul's use of them, is revealed to be quite arbitrary. The Greek noun *kerygma* and its corresponding verb mean simply "preaching" and "to preach," without specification of content. In Paul's vocabulary "*kerygma*" is one of the synonyms for "gospel." Thus, Rom 1:16-17, where the apostle speaks of the gospel which brings salvation to those who believe, has a parallel in I Cor 1:21 where Paul says it is the *kerygma* which saves those who believe. And just as in Rom 1:17 Paul speaks of the gospel as "the power of God," so does he, in I Cor 2:4-5, speak of the *kerygma* as "the power of God."

The meaning of both terms is most clearly seen in another expression, synonymous with these first two: *word of God*. Paul never uses this phrase to refer to Scripture; he couples together "word" and "*kerygma*" in I Cor 2:4 and then describes both as "the power of God." In the Old Testament the "word" (Hebrew: *dabhar*) of God often referred to God's coming and acting, his deed accomplished in history. The famous passage from Second Isaiah is typical: God's word is like the rain and the snow which come down from heaven to water the earth; God's word accomplishes that which he has purposed and prospers in the thing for which he has sent it (55:10-11). In precisely the same way Paul can speak of God's word which is "*at work* among you believers" (I Thess 2:13) and which does not "fail" (Rom 9:6). The apostle does not think of the word of God, the gospel, *or* the "*kerygma*" as a series of theological propositions or religious truths. These terms designate the *activity* of preaching and God's coming to men in the preached word, not the theological substance of preaching.

It is likewise misleading to use the term "*didache*" as a designation for moral and ethical instruction in contrast to theological proclamation. *Didache* means "that which is taught," and this may be theological as well as ethical![6] Two of the four occurrences of this noun in Paul's letters are suspect, on other grounds, of being later, non-Pauline additions (Rom 6:17; 16:17).[7] The two remaining occurrences are both in I Cor 14 (vv. 6, 26) where, along with revelations, knowledge, prophesies, hymns, speaking in tongues, and interpretations, "teaching" is listed as one component of the

[6] Even Dodd acknowledges this fact when he observes that sometimes, "especially in the Johannine writings, [*didache*] includes the exposition of theological doctrine" (*Apostolic Preaching*, p. 7).

[7] For the view that the whole of Rom 16 is by a later hand see John Knox's introduction to the letter in *The Interpreter's Bible*, IX, pp. 365-368. Rudolf Bultmann also holds Rom 6.17 to be a non-Pauline interpolation ("Glossen im Römerbrief," *Theologische Literaturzeitung*, LXXII, 1947, 202).

community's worship. In these lists "*didache*" is probably used to describe the exposition of Scripture, what we (and also Dodd!) would call "preaching." In this connection it is of more than just passing significance that Paul can speak of "catechizing the word" (Gal 6:6). From his point of view no hard and fast distinction between "preaching the gospel" and "teaching Christian standards" is possible.

Rather striking confirmation of this conclusion may be found in the way Paul himself describes the ministry of his fellow workers. In I Cor 4:17 Paul writes: "Therefore I sent to you Timothy, my beloved and faithful child in the Lord, to remind you of my ways in Christ, as I teach them everywhere in every church." Everything about this statement indicates that Paul is thinking of Timothy's mission to Corinth as primarily "didactic," according to Dodd's use of the term: to issue moral exhortation and instruction. Paul had just averred that the Corinthians were in need of admonition (v. 14: "I do not write this to make you ashamed, but to admonish you as my beloved children"); when he says Timothy is sent to *remind* the Corinthians, the term Paul selects is a technical one used by Greek moralists to mean instruction in right conduct; and of course the word "teach" itself —from Dodd's point of view—specifies the nature of Timothy's task. Consistent with this description of Timothy's didactic function is the remark in Phil 2:20 that he will soon be sent to the Philippian congregation to exercise responsibility for certain unspecified "things" among them; and also the words to the Thessalonians (I, 3:2): "We sent Timothy . . . to establish you in your faith and to exhort you. . . ."

So far one gains the impression that Paul conceives of his own ministry as kerygmatic —the preaching of the gospel to those outside the church—but of Timothy's ministry as didactic—the instruction and exhortation of those within the church. However, a closer examination of these texts demonstrates the impossibility of any such neat distinction of functions. For one thing, it must be noticed that in I Cor 4:17 Paul speaks of his *own* teaching "everywhere in every church," a fact for which the mere existence of any one of Paul's letters would be sufficient evidence. But more than this, in each of the other passages there is reference to Timothy's serving in and for the gospel (*kerygma!*). "Timothy's worth you know," he writes to Philippi, "how as a son with a father he has served with me in the gospel" (2:22); and in I Thessalonians he refers to Timothy as a "brother," and "God's servant in the gospel of Christ" (3:2). It is perfectly consistent, then, for Paul to declare that "Timothy is doing the work of the Lord *as I am*" (I Cor 16:10). In fact, in a later letter to Corinth, the apostle refers to the work of himself, Timothy, and Silvanus, under the one comprehensive slogan, "*preaching* the Son of God, Jesus Christ" (II Cor 1:19).

Even the passages surveyed thus far should suffice for demonstrating the impossibility of Dodd's contention that for Paul "it was by *kerygma*. . . , not by *didache*, that it pleased God to save man."[8] Paul does indeed say that God was pleased to save man by the *kerygma* (I Cor 1:21); but it is false to add that for Paul salvation is "*not* by *didache*." Nowhere does the apostle make this negative evaluation of teaching; nowhere does he suggest that *didache* is anything else than a special mode of preaching the gospel of God.

II

The untenability of Dodd's distinction between *kerygma* and *didache* is further illustrated in Paul's use of the noun *paraclesis*, and its verb, *paracaleo*. Dodd assumes that "*paraclesis*" is a synonym for "*didache*" (moral instruction).[9] While it is very true

[8] *Apostolic Preaching*, p. 8.
[9] *Ibid.*

that often the best translation of the noun is "exhortation," the word may also mean "comfort" or "encouragement," and it must be translated in Phil 2:1: "If there is any *encouragement* in Christ. . . ." As this passage makes clear, the "encouragement" which is in Christ is moral encouragement, namely, the exhortation to "have this mind among yourselves which you have in Christ Jesus" (v. 5). The word "*paraclesis*" itself embraces the twin aspects of Paul's preaching: the gift of God's love in Christ (what Dodd sees articulated in the "*kerygma*", and the consequent demand of God upon men (what Dodd sees articulated in the "*didache*").

This may be amply documented by reference to the opening chapters of I Thessalonians. There Paul refers back to his visit in Thessalonica when, "even in the face of great opposition," he had courage "to declare . . . the gospel of God" (2:2). It is clear from the context that Paul and his fellow workers have been attacked, and that here the apostle is trying to defend the purity of their motives in preaching the gospel. He continues:

> For our appeal [Greek: *paraclesis*] does not spring from envy or uncleanness, nor is it made with guile; but just as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, so we speak, not to please men, but to please God who tests our hearts. (vv. 3-4)

The important point to note here is that the terms "gospel" (vv. 2,4) and "appeal" (v. 3) are parallel, both referring back to the summary of Paul's preaching found in chapter 1 (vv. 9-10). Since the English word "appeal" in this passage translates *paraclesis*, it is clear that for the apostle "exhortation" and "gospel" can be used interchangeably, so closely are they identified in his own mind.

But does there not remain some validity in Dodd's distinction insofar as it perceives a difference between the church's "missionary preaching" (*kerygma*) and its ethical instruction to those already converted (*didache*)? Such a distinction would mean, automatically, that Paul's letters as such must be classified as *didache*. This conclusion Dodd does not hesitate to draw, indicating that "they expound and defend the implications of the Gospel rather than proclaim it."[10] Yet the Pauline letters themselves not only fail to lend support to this distinction, they directly contradict it.[11] The whole discussion of apostolic "salaries" in I Cor 9 (see especially vv. 12-18) has no meaning unless this *preaching of the gospel* (vv. 16, 18) is to organized Christian congregations. Moreover, it is to an *existing Christian church* that Paul writes, "I am eager to preach the gospel to you also who are at Rome" (Rom 1:15). This preaching of the gospel, as Romans 1:11-12 indicates, will have the character of spiritual encouragement and moral exhortation: "For I long to see you, that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to strengthen you, that is, that we may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith, both yours and mine." The phrase "mutually encouraged" here translates a passive form of the verb *synparacaleo*. This passage provides further support for the thesis that Paul can, without hesitation, describe his exhortation (*paraclesis*) as "preaching the gospel."

Hence, even the exhortation and instruction of those already within the church is "kerygmatic" in the sense that it not only presupposes but is identical with the *kerygma*. When, in II Cor 11:4, Paul speaks of false teachers who may come preaching "another Jesus than the one we preached" and offering a "different gospel," the implication is that the gospel is repeatedly proclaimed within the congregation, and that *kerygma* is a usual part of the community's life. Of this there is no clearer

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[10] *Ibid.*, p. 9.

[11] This is also the conclusion of G. Friedrich in the article on "Gospel" in Kittel, *Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament*, II, p. 717.

example than Paul's own exhortation to the Corinthians to be "steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord" (I Cor 15:58), an exhortation based directly upon the kerygmatic appeal with which the chapter had opened (vv. 1-11) and of which the remainder of the chapter had been an elaboration.

III

The foregoing survey of relevant passages in the Pauline letters suggests that Dodd's distinction between *kerygma* and *didache* does not do justice to the integrity of exhortation and proclamation within the earliest New Testament materials. It suggests, further, that no clear-cut distinction between the church's preaching and teaching ministries is possible. And perhaps most significantly, it helps to demonstrate the integrity of "theology" and "ethics" in Paul's thought.

Every attempt to separate Paul's *kerygma* from ethical teaching fails to understand first, that the gospel gives basis and meaning to the ethic, and second, that the gospel without the ethic is—in Paul's view—no gospel at all. Furthermore, such a distinction misunderstands the purpose of the ethical teachings and exhortations found in the apostle's letters. It is commonly held, and correctly, that Paul's hortatory style and many of his ethical terms are dependent upon the Hellenistic moral tradition, taken over from Greek and Jewish writers who were his predecessors and contemporaries. What most students of Paul's ethic have failed to observe, however, is (1) the radically different *character* of Paul's exhortations, and (2) the entirely different *function* they are intended to serve.

In the first place, the content of the apostle's ethical teaching is dependent upon the evangelical context of his total appeal. In I Corinthians, the very letter where, more than any other, he sets about to give instructions concerning specific problems, he consistently refuses to become preoccupied with particular "virtues" and "vices" for what they are in themselves or for what they may engender. Rather, Paul's concern is for what they indicate about the *person* and his relationship to God. There are no lengthy disquisitions on individual moral traits, such as were so popular in the Hellenistic world. It is probably a request for just that kind of moral essay which the apostle denies when he replies to the Thessalonians, "Concerning 'love of the brethren' you have no need to have any one write you, for you yourselves have been taught by God to love one another . . ." (I, 4:9). Instead of responding with the requested "advice" (the Greeks called this *paraenesis*), Paul then issues the needed exhortation (*paraclesis*): to put love into practice more and more (vv. 10-12). Paul is writing not as an "advisor," but as an apostle of the gospel of God, and the *character* of his ethical teaching ("*didache*") is determined by the theological perspective ("*kerygma*") with which he writes.

Secondly, Paul's ethical exhortations, when compared with the teaching of the Hellenistic moralists, are shown to serve a unique *function*. The function of moral advice in the Greco-Roman world in general is aptly summarized in a syllogism quoted by the philosopher Seneca (died A. D. 65): "The happy life consists in upright conduct; precepts guide one to upright conduct; therefore precepts are sufficient for attaining the happy life."[12] In spite of claims to the contrary,[13] this is by no means an adequate description also of the intended function of Paul's ethical exhortations. His exhortations are not given as precepts useful in attaining a "happy life," but *presuppose* that those addressed already share in the new life God has given.

That is why it can be said that Paul's

[12] Epistulae Morales xcv. 1.

[13] Alfred J. Gross, "The Development of Pauline Paraenesis on Civil Obedience," unpublished doctoral dissertation, The University of Chicago, 1947, p. 2.

ethic is grounded in his theology, that the imperative springs from the indicative. *Paraclesis* is first of all a word of "encouragement" because it calls the Christian back to the source and ground of the life he has been given. It is also "exhortation" because it challenges him to live in a manner appropriate to his new situation. The effect of this *paraclesis* is precisely the opposite of Hellenistic *paraenesis* (moral advice). The paraenetic writer thought of his advice as a valuable legacy, like that bequeathed by a father to his son. The Greek and Jewish moralists often used this very metaphor, indicating that their collected instructions and precepts were sufficient to afford considerable *moral security* by specifying all the necessary virtues. But Paul's *paraclesis*, in contrast, affords no such security; its effect is to *unsettle*, to challenge all security and complacency, to put a question mark after every so-called "good work" or "high ideal." Thus, the apostle is constantly appealing for self-criticism and self-judgment: "Let a man test himself . . ." (I Cor 12:28); "Examine yourselves, test yourselves . . ." (II Cor 13:5); Let each one test his own work . . ." (Gal 6:4).

It is in Rom 12:1-2 that we may find the best summary both of Paul's "theology" and his "ethic."

> I exhort you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present yourselves as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but rather, be transformed in the renewal of your life, in order that you may find out what the will of God is, what is the good and acceptable and perfect.[14]

Here the apostle's basic appeal (*paraclesis*, v. 1) is that the Christian should "present" or "surrender" himself to God. The same expression is used in Rom 6:13: "Present yourselves to God as men who have been brought from death to life. . . ." It is clear that, for Paul, the life the Christian is to give has been given to him. The Christian's offering is a "*living* sacrifice" because he is one who has been brought from death to life. Paul does not say "transform yourselves." Rather, he uses the *passive* imperative, "Be transformed." And the present fact of this transformation is the presupposition upon the basis of which the exhortation is made.

Moreover, the appeal is to "*find out* what the will of God is." Paul is reluctant ever to specify in detail the content of God's will. He often seeks to illustrate and demonstrate how God's will is discovered (this is what he is doing in chapters 12-15 of Romans), but never to codify it in terms of some "Christian law."[15] For this apostle life in Christ is life sustained and guided by the Spirit, whose leading is through love (Rom 5:5); and it is through love that God's will may be known and confirmed.[16] The appeal is that the man in Christ, through love, put this new, resurrected life at the disposal of God the giver.

The "ethical teachings" of Paul's letters, therefore, are not instructions, directions, advice, or regulations. They function as *paraclesis*, exhortation which declares both the gift and the demand of God's love, and illustrations of the way in which faith, rendered active through love (see Gal 5:6), may be expressed in specific circumstances. Is this "*kerygma*" or "*didache*"? Or are we here in touch with a gospel whose theology is essentially hortatory and whose ethic is essentially kerygmatic?

[14] My own translation. Here as elsewhere I have taken certain liberties in citing Paul, but always on the basis of exegetical work too detailed to include in the present article.

[15] Dodd has attempted to show, but not very persuasively, that Paul's reference to "the law of Christ" (I Cor 9:21; Gal 6:2) presupposes just such a Christian pattern for conduct which "can be stated in the form of a code of precepts to which a Christian man is obliged to conform" ("*Ennomos Christou*," in *Studia Paulina*, in honorem Johannis de Zwaan [Haarlem: Erven F. Bohn, N.V., 1953], p. 100).

[16] Thus, Paul's prayer for the Philippians is that they may abound in love "with knowledge and all discernment," whereby they are to "find out what is necessary," i. e., the will of God (Phil 1:9-10).

BOOKS

Schubert M. Ogden

editor

LET US BREAK BREAD TOGETHER. *By Fred D. Gealy. Abingdon, $2.50.*

The publication of this volume of communion meditations, arranged in accordance with the seasons of the church year, is much more than a tribute to a revered professor by his students, who in this way have tried to express their indebtedness and appreciation. The church is here offered an invaluable, though unsystematic, statement of the theology of one of America's most creative New Testament scholars, who deserves to be much better known than he is. In the areas of christology and the theology of the sacraments especially, Dr. Gealy presents us with insights whose importance and relevance it would be difficult to exaggerate.

The opening meditation from the First Sunday in Advent begins with the question that dominates every day of the church year and each page of the book: "What does it mean to say that God comes?" Dr. Gealy insists that this question can become a question of ultimate concern for our lives only when it is asked in the present, not the past, tense. The ultimate question is not the historical question, "Did God come?" but the existential question, "Does God come now, for me?" It is in the witness of Holy Scripture that Dr. Gealy finds the answer to this ultimate question. "God has not just shown himself in the past; nor is his coming simply some far-off divine event. The coming one has come. The light shines. And in the presence of this revelation we see ourselves as we are in our true relation to the world, to one another, and to God. In showing himself to us, God shows us to ourselves. Light is not to look at but to see by."

Man encounters the living God, then, whenever and however he is confronted with the truth about himself—the truth of his dependence on something outside of himself for life and the truth of his unwillingness to have it so. This is the human predicament: Man desires life above all things, and yet his existence is always an existence toward death. But when he finally lays down his life by giving up his futile struggle to give life to himself or to derive his life out of the world about him, then and only then is he able to experience the miracle of receiving his life as a gift freely offered, and with the gift, the giver. He experiences the reality of the living Christ only as he is encountered here and now by that possibility which became flesh and dwelt among us in the person of Jesus of Nazareth—the possibility of a new future of faith in the faithfulness of One who is the giver of life.

It is, however, in connection with the sacrament of Holy Communion that this book becomes most exciting. The Zwinglian concept of the sacrament, which has had so dominant an influence on the Methodist Church in particular and Protestantism in general, is rejected. The sacrament of Holy Communion is not primarily a memorial service. Dr. Gealy affirms time and time again that it is the real presence of God in Christ that encounters man in the bread and the wine. To be sure, memory plays an important role in this encounter. For the sacraments "have their origin in, derive their meaning from, and are to be understood only with reference to the crucifixion, the exaltation, and the resurrection of Jesus Christ." Man's role in the celebration of the Holy Communion is to remember a past revelatory event, which occurred two thousand years ago, and in so doing revive it in the here and now.

But the primary question in the sacrament is not what man does, but what God does. "The New Testament answer is that God takes the old saving event, and by way both of repudiation and reinterpretation, creates a new saving event." Dr. Gealy thus

affirms the objective validity of the sacrament as a way of expressing the truth that it is what God does that gives the sacrament its saving efficacy.

But he is also clear that the sacrament is not a magical rite having meaning apart from man's participation and response. "I wonder if we cannot say that Christ exists only where and as he is received in faith, where he is adored, where he is celebrated. When we extend our hands to receive him, he comes! He is here! This is not a mere memorial service where we remember the dead. We come to actualize the real presence of the Lord of life."

Faith, then, is never a purely subjective phenomenon; for it is always faith in the One who is the giver of life. The real presence of God in Christ in the sacrament is not to be identified with the miraculous manipulation of the sacramental elements; for the natural bread and wine are signs of the created order and of our creaturely selves, which we here offer to the One who has given all to us—even as Jesus offered himself on Calvary. In the sacrament, "we celebrate . . . one whose faithful acceptance of death meant the death of death in him and life for us. We come here to learn how to lay down of our own accord that which is taken away from us. If we can do this, then our deaths, too, will mean life for the world. This is the miracle for which we now await."

This little volume can only lead one to hope that the church may hear further from its author.

C. Ebb Munden

ONE WORLD, ONE MISSION. *By W. Richey Hogg. Friendship Press, $1.50 (paper); $1.95 (cloth).*

The American churches have long needed an easy-to-read handbook of missions, which would cover the whole field from the biblical basis of mission to contemporary missionary organization and policy. Although the American churches produce annually a number of mission-study books for use by their members, this particular need, which would seem to be the most basic one, has not been met. Perhaps it is because such a book would have to deal with the "controversial" questions of biblical interpretation and with the contemporary critique of mission policy that it has been avoided.

Now at last, however, such a book has appeared and the churches are greatly indebted to Dr. Hogg for writing it and to the Friendship Press (the publishing arm of the Commission on Missionary Education of the National Council of Churches) for publishing it.

The most impressive feature of this book, as an officially adopted study book for the churches, is its honest confrontation of the problems that face the Christian mission and its recognition of the serious nature of those problems. It deals, for example, with the need for non-Western missionaries and the difficulties raised by the heavy preponderance of Western missionaries in a mission that is meant to represent not a Western but a universal faith. It also gives a report on the new experiments being made in various parts of the world to meet some of these problems.

Beyond this, it provides a good introduction to the ecumenical movement and presents the mission of the church in relation to the unity of the church. It sees the world-wide mission in close relation to the local mission of each congregation of Christians. In all of these ways, it represents the best current thinking on the church's mission and should do much to deepen and broaden the understanding of that mission in present-day America.

Charles W. Forman

WESLEY'S CHRISTOLOGY: AN INTERPRETATION. *By John Deschner. Southern Methodist University Press, $4.50.*

Whatever truth there was in the rumor some years ago that a Methodist graduate student at Basel was instructing Professor Karl Barth in the principles of Methodism, it is clear from the volume here under review that that student, himself now a professor, made very good use of his time under the guidance and encouragement of Barth, which in the Preface he gratefully acknowledges. Not that what Dr. Deschner

gives us is a "Barthian" interpretation of Wesley. He has good Wesleyan grounds for measuring, as he does, Wesley's teaching on the person of Christ by the standards of Chalcedonian orthodoxy, and for presenting the work of Christ in orthodox Protestant terms under the aspects of prophet, priest and king. At every point, moreover, he maintains close contact with the primary sources, relying chiefly though not exclusively on "the standard Wesley" (the Articles of Religion, the Standard Sermons, and the Notes on the New Testament). The result is not only an excellent account of Wesley's christological views, including some significant criticism of Lindstrom's interpretation, but also an exposition of their relation to the more explicit and familiar themes of his preaching and teaching, particularly justification and sanctification.

Christology, Deschner seeks to show, was not simply ancillary to Wesley's prime concern with sanctification, but was the basic presupposition of his entire soteriological outlook. It was also the center in which the diverse strands of his thought found their unity, and the tensions between law and gospel, wrath and grace, justice and mercy, faith and works, were in principle overcome. A point of particular interest is the significance attached to Wesley's "evangelical conversion" in 1738, which is seen as involving also a theological conversion. This did not mean the acquisition of a brand new theology, but the rethinking of an already mature theological position, and it did not take place in a moment or without effort. But the result of it was such that Deschner might well have adapted the title of a well-known book about Barth to describe his own: "The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of John Wesley."

Even so, he finds it necessary to raise critical questions at a number of points, particularly concerning Wesley's underemphasis on the humanity of Christ, the place he gives to the law, and his denial of the imputation of the active righteousness of Christ. He makes no claim, of course, to have given us the definitive analysis of Wesley's thought, and himself suggests alternative approaches to the subject that might well shed further light on it. Yet what he has given us is scholarly, readable and illuminating, and his book is a worthy and welcome addition to the small but happily increasing number of works that take Wesley seriously as a thinker. It is one more proof of the hollowness of the time-honoured Methodist excuse for theological indolence, that Wesley was a man of practical concern and no theologian.

Philip S. Watson

THE CONCISE ENCYCLOPEDIA OF LIVING FAITHS. *Edited by R. C. Zaehner. Hawthorne, $12.95.*

This very attractive, illustrated volume is the joint product of fifteen scholars, all but one of whom are, or have been, associated with British or Canadian universities. The competence of these specialists to write on the subjects assigned to them is unquestionable; indeed, the names of several of them—for example, H. A. R. Gibb and Edward Conze—are more than familiar to anyone who tries to "keep up" in the literature on world religions.

Ten traditional religions plus Jungian depth psychology and Marxist Communism are included in this volume. A single article is devoted to each major religion except in the cases of Christianity and Buddhism, whose diffuseness seems to require a more diversified treatment—in this book, four and three articles respectively. Excepting the sketchy discussion of the two "new religions" mentioned above, each article is clearly authoritative in character and encyclopedic in scope. Only minor grievances could be voiced and minor omissions cited as negative criticism of these essays.

However, even with these facts as substantial evidence to the contrary, there still is some question as to whether the use of the term "encyclopedia" in advertising this volume may be misleading. No charge of fraud is intended here; for I suppose the book conforms well enough to the literal, dictionary meaning of the term in question. But it is of at least minor importance to remark that most American book shoppers probably would not find this book to be

what they would expect an encyclopedia on this subject to be, namely, an "instant" reference book for the home or office library.

A much more important consideration is the rather surprising, almost doctrinaire, editorial perspective that provides the setting for the separate treatises. I usually think of an encyclopedia as a prime example of detached scholarship—a dedication to fact for fact's sake, relatively free from passion or valuative judgments. The editor of this "encyclopedia," however, has a cause. This book, he says, is "primarily designed" for many European and American "post-Christians who are not at home in the desert of their unbelief" and who have developed a new interest in Oriental religions. Further, he looks hopefully toward a possible bridging of the gulf between the utterly diverse "Eastern and Western ideas of religion." His ideas (largely germinal) on these matters are set forth in an Introduction and a Conclusion; they are not reflected in the essays of the other authors. However provacative, and, in a sense, even timely, the editor's perspective is, it does not seem to this reviewer to be appropriate to the character of the articles that mainly comprise the volume or to the implications of the title.

This is, nevertheless, a good book, which merits wide distribution. It may be just the book you need; but you may wish to see it before you buy it, since it may not be the book you think it is.

H. Neill McFarland

THE LAYMAN'S BIBLE COMMENTARY, II: GENESIS. *By C. T. Fritsch. John Knox Press, $2.00 (4 or more copies $1.75 each).*

THE LAYMAN'S BIBLE COMMENTARY, XIV: HOSEA, JOEL, AMOS, OBADIAH, JONAH. *By Jacob M. Myers. John Knox Press, $2.00 (4 or more copies $1.75 each).*

These are the first two of fourteen volumes on the Old Testament to be published in the Layman's Bible Commentary. The editors have designed the series to serve the needs of the layman in the personal study of his own Bible. Hence attempts have been made both to be concise and to be non-technical. Certainly neither of these volumes could be described as deviating in either of these areas from the avowed intentions of the editors. The only question concerns their utility in the hands of the laity.

In the case of the commentary on Genesis, it is not easy to be enthusiastic. The book has obvious merits in that the author has approached what is admittedly a difficult subject with sympathy and in places (e.g., the Joseph cycle) with enthusiasm. He has provided an excellent introduction to the literary criticism of the book and, for the most part, utilizes archaeological data with discretion. On the other hand, he has the tendency, which to this reader is at once tiresome and disconcerting, to preach unctuous, pious sermons, filled with the old meaningless cliches, and based on an exegetical method that ought to have been discarded long ago. I would, therefore, hesitate to recommend the book for the purpose it was intended to fulfill.

Myer's book on the first five of the minor prophets is a much more satisfying piece of work. He is at his best in his organization of Amos and Hosea, on both of which he writes with exemplary clarity and rare insight. His work on Jonah and Joel is not quite as effective. In the case of Jonah, the author is rather too much absorbed in the status and condition of the great fish to treat the message of the whole book with imagination, while in that of Joel, he pays little heed to the eschatological motifs that govern its composition. Nonetheless, this is a book that ought to find its way into the hands both of the inquiring layman, and of the pastor who feels the need of encountering once more the stimulating challenge of the eighth century prophets.

W. J. A. Power

JESUS AND GOD'S NEW PEOPLE: THE FOUR GOSPEL'S. *By Howard Clark Kee. Westminster, $1.50.*

This volume is one in a series of "Westminster Guides to the Bible" planned to meet the need for books that can mediate

to the serious lay reader the results of sound biblical scholarship. After two introductory chapters, Professor Kee devotes additional chapters to each of the synoptic gospels, and to John.

Chapter one ("Faith and Facts in the Gospels") attempts to frame an adequate perspective from which to view the gospels, and deals with such questions as "Did the miracles occur?" and "Did Jesus rise from the dead?" Chapter two ("From the Gospel to the Gospels") furnishes a brief introduction to the problems of gospel sources and literary relationships.

On virtually every issue Kee attempts to represent the scholarly concensus, and although his basic orientation is clearly "historical-critical," on no point does he take an extreme position. Theologically, he represents the current interest in affirming the community setting of the New Testament: "The Gospel writers all speak from within this community of faith, and from that perspective they report what Jesus said and did."

This book is readable and usable for lay study classes and can also be put in the hands of interested individuals. Since it deals in rather general terms with the purpose, contents, and perspective of the gospels, the reader who wishes more detailed help on specific points and passages will probably need to supplement his study by reference to some of the excellent "laymen's commentaries" now being made available.

Victor P. Furnish

GNOSTICISM AND EARLY CHRISTIANITY. *By Robert M. Grant. Columbia University Press, $4.50.*

THE SECRET SAYINGS OF JESUS. *By Robert M. Grant and David Noel Freedman, with an English translation of the Gospel of Thomas by William R. Schoedel, Doubleday, $3.50.*

These two books may be reviewed together because they are closely related both in subject matter and authorship.

Gnosticism and Early Christianity is made up of six lectures prepared and delivered under the auspices of the Committee on the History of Religions of the American Council of Learned Societies. Grant's most important contribution in this book is his idea that Gnosticism first came into being within Jewish apocalyptic circles in response to the shattering effect of the defeats the Jewish community suffered in the wars of 66-70 A.D. and following. This hypothesis and the arguments adduced to support it are no less plausible than bold. To Grant belongs the credit of being the first to make any sense out of the history of Gnosticism. We should not be surprised if later research requires some modification of Grant's views. But it seems unlikely to this reviewer that he will be proven completely wrong.

Grant's discussion of the relationship between Gnosticism and early Christianity provides an important introduction to the matter, and in a sense lays the foundation for the research presupposed by *The Secret Sayings of Jesus*, which, though in itself a completely different sort of book, may still be regarded as a kind of sequel to *Gnosticism and Early Christianity*.

The Secret Sayings of Jesus is most useful. It not only introduces the reader to the newly discovered Coptic Gospel of Thomas, but also to the wider field of apocryphal gospel studies. Anyone who approaches the Gospel of Thomas *de novo* is quite likely to misjudge its importance. Grant, in addition to his knowledge of early Christian literature, brings to his study of this document a thorough acquaintance with Gnosticism, which enables him to place the Gospel of Thomas within its proper literary—historical setting and to interpret it against the background of the peculiar needs and interests of the community that produced it.

The book seems to have been conceived with a wide reading public in mind and is properly edited with this end in view. First, the reader is given an account of the recent discovery of the Coptic manuscripts of which the Gospel of Thomas is only one. Then the reader is quickly but masterfully led through the complicated field of apocryphal gospel studies, followed by an excursion into the area of "gospel findings in the papyri." Thus oriented within the literary

genre of the Gospel of Thomas, the reader is next introduced to Gnosticism. First, it is demonstrated that the Gospel of Thomas is a Gnostic document. Then, the question whether Thomas gives us trustworthy information about the sayings of Jesus is pursued. It is demonstrated that there is good reason to be cautious in affirming that we can learn anything new about Jesus from this document. The final eighty-one pages of the text is given over to a valuable translation of the gospel. Each of the 112 sayings is printed separately and annotated, though the Coptic text itself is not included.

Taken together, *Gnosticism and Early Christianity* and *The Secret Sayings of Jesus* represent new and significant contributions to our understanding of the *archaic* period of Christian orthodoxy, i.e., that creative period which falls between the time of the New Testament proper and the time of the creedal formulations of the church. This is a most important period in the history of Christian theology, and Robert Grant must now be acknowledged as one of the leading New Testament critics to address himself to problems facing the scholar who works in this area of Christian origins.

W. R. Farmer

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO THOMAS. *Edited and translated by A. Guillaumont, H.-Ch. Puech, G. Quispel, W. Till and Yassah 'Abd Al Masih. Harper, $2.00.*

About 1945 some peasants digging for nitrates for fertilizer at Nag Hamadi, the ancient Khenoboskion, found a jar containing thirteen volumes which proved to be a Gnostic library, in Coptic, on papyrus, leather-bound. In 1956 the Government Press in Cairo issued a volume of photographs of part of the one volume acquired by the Coptic Museum at Cairo, including the document that claims to be "The Gospel According to Thomas" or "the secret words which the living Jesus spoke and Didymos Judas Thomas wrote." Since the document describes itself as a "gospel," and is made up of 114 logia, generally introduced by "Jesus said," public interest prompted its quick transcription, translation and publication in modern European languages (German, 1958; French and English, 1959). The text is said to be well-preserved, although some restorations and emendations have been judged necessary by the editors.

Some special characteristics of the "gospel" may be noted:

1. It is the most extensive single non-canonical collection of Jesus-logia or agrapha ever found.

2. Although it calls itself a "gospel," it is composed only of sayings. Other "gospels," including the second century apocryphal gospels, all include narrative or event pericopae.

3. The sayings are generally juxtaposed without connecting links. Most frequently Jesus speaks unprompted. On occasion, "the disciples" question him (log. 12, 22, 23, 37, 99, 113); or "Matthew" or "Thomas" does (log. 12, 13).

4. The sayings are arranged in a sequence quite different from that in our gospels.

5. From beginning to the end the tone of the texts is Gnostic, although on every page (See "Scriptural Parallels and Echoes," pages 59-62) one sees items found in the canonical gospels. Yet the turn and treatment given them belongs to another world.

According to our editors, "we are dealing with a translation or an adaptation in Sahidic Coptic of a work the primitive text of which must have been produced in Greek about 140 A. D., and which was based on even more ancient sources." The historical problem that most concerns the New Testament student is what those "even more ancient sources" were. Are there any sayings here which are "authentic" Jesus-sayings? Is there here direct evidence of a stream of Jesus-logia apart from and other than that which flowed into our canonical gospels? Or is the Gospel of Thomas dependent solely on our gospels where it offers parallels to or echoes of them, and is it elsewhere wholly imaginative or fictitious? Since the document is so certainly Gnostic—that is, non-Palestinian—in character, the a priori presumption is that its contents are far-removed in time as well as in temper from the life-situation of

logia-materials as recorded in our canonical gospels. The burden of proof certainly falls on any attempt to show that the sayings in Thomas are earlier, or more authentic than their parallels in the gospels, or indeed that they are authentic at all. Yet, one word of caution needs to be given. Just as the best New Testament, textually, must be chosen verse by verse, so every verse in Thomas must be appraised according to the best rules of textual criticism. Neither the lateness nor the heretical origin of a document is of itself sufficient to settle either the date or the provenance of the material it reproduces.

In the meantime, *The Gospel According to Thomas* makes very interesting reading. Many of the sayings, with their unexpected turns, are thought-provoking and are characterized by some dimension of depth. Some of them could even be preached from. Of course, this wouldn't prove anything—except that they could be preached from.

Persons who are interested in reading further on the document should consult *The Secret Sayings of Jesus* by Robert M. Grant with David Noel Freedman.

Fred D. Gealy

A NEW QUEST OF THE HISTORICAL JESUS. *By James M. Robinson. Alec R. Allenson. Studies in Biblical Theology 25, $2.25.*

No more important monographs are now being published in biblical studies than the excellent treatises appearing with some regularity in the series named above. These cover a variety of subjects in both Old and New Testament. The Robinson monograph under review is from several standpoints a very important volume. I am not aware of any treatment in print which shows so comprehensive a knowledge of recent literature in all languages on some of the most widely debated New Testament problems of the day as this account. The author has not only searched the books and the periodicals, both biblical and theological, which have to do with his subject, but as a biblical theologian, he is exceptionally well-equipped both biblically and theologically to bring new excitement to the material. The extensive footnotes in the text furnish almost a complete bibliography of the literature of the last fifty years as it bears on the problem of the life of Jesus, both historically and kerygmatically.

Of course the "old quest" of the historical Jesus was the one for which Albert Schweitzer's *Quest of the Historical Jesus* provided the obituary. If the last fifty years have moved from history to kerygma, with the result that we have seen almost the total abandonment of the quest of the Jesus of history, now, it is proposed, the time has come when fully recognizing the "impossibility and illegitimacy of the original quest," work may again move forward towards both the possibility and legitimacy of a new quest.

Robinson gives an excellent account of the "Bultmannian" epoch in Germany and of the "post-Bultmannian" quest. The new quest is made possible because of a new concept of history and the self. The shifts in perspective require a new quest. It is our belief that Robinson has here some answers which many have been looking for. He has found a way of bridging the gap between Jesus and the Church's faith in him, which is soundly set in our contemporary philosophical and theological language, which both demands the continuation of the historical-critical method, which recognizes fully the kerygmatic nature of our documents, and which provides a way for an encounter with both the historic Jesus and with the Church's kerygma.

This book must be read by any minister who has been concerned with biblical scholarship and its analysis of the historical and theological foundations of our faith as these have been set out during the last fifty years.

Fred D. Gealy

CONSUMMATUM EST: ESCHATOLOGY AND CHURCH IN THE GOSPEL OF JOHN. *By Alf Corell. Macmillan, $5.00.*

This book is the translation of an essay published in Sweden in 1950. Its thesis is that in the Fourth Gospel there is organic

connection between eschatology and the idea of the Church. The Church has its roots in eschatology, which in turn is anchored in the Church. It is this relation which protects *John* from (1) the mystic's individualistic experience of timelessness and (2) the apocalyptist's attempt to chart the last things. It is the doctrine of the Church which prevents Johannine theology from being either mystical or apocalyptic. Eschatological ideas are made concrete in the Church. Hence in the liturgy the Christian experiences proleptically the age to come. In the Church, the distance between this world and the world to come has been annihilated. Thus the turning point of history is the cry of Jesus from the cross: "It is finished."

Of special interest in the book are (1) the detailed studies of specific passages and of terms, such as "logos," "signs," "life," "glory," "truth," and so forth; and (2) the twenty-four pages of bibliography, including books and periodicals, from the Fathers to 1951. The bibliography reads like that of a doctoral dissertation. It has not been amended to include materials written since 1951 although some of the more important newer items are mentioned in the author's preface to the English edition. Largely German, the listings of studies in English are incomplete.

Fred D. Gealy

LORDSHIP AND DISCIPLESHIP. *By Eduard Schweizer. Studies in Biblical Theology 28. Alec R. Allenson. $2.25.*

This monograph, a translation and thorough revision of a book first published in German in 1955, serves to introduce its author, Professor of New Testament at Zürich, to English-speaking readers. This is really a study of the christology of the earliest church, and Schweizer's thesis is most clearly indicated by the original title (in German): "Humiliation and Exaltation Among Jesus and His Followers."

Schweizer argues that the "first Church . . . confessed Jesus as the eschatological Fulfiller of all the prophecies," particularly identifying his passion with the suffering of the Righteous One of Israel (Ps. 22; Isa. 50, 53, etc.), for whom also suffering "is the unavoidable gateway to glory." This earliest "christology," then, begins with an emphasis upon Jesus' *humiliation* "for us" (i.e., "for our sins") and thereby stands in the closest continuity with Jesus' own preaching: "Jesus spoke of himself as of the Son of man humiliated on earth, rejected by men, exalted by God out of all suffering, and witnessing for or against those who will appear before the throne of God in the Last Judgment."

But when this message is "translated" for the Hellenistic church, we are told, a second motif emerges. Now this confession begins with Jesus as the exalted Lord over all cosmic powers who *subsequently* "humbles himself unto death" (Phil. 2:6-11). In its Hellenistic garb (which Schweizer holds is "a correct reproduction of the original testimony") the emphasis falls on the church's being raised "with him." Where the church is asking how a man can be righteous before God it stresses Jesus' humiliation, and the "for us" character of his death; where it seeks (as in the Hellenistic world) to elude a blind fate it stresses Jesus' exaltation and the believers' new life "with him." These two assertions the New Testament knits closely together.

Schweizer appears in this book as a "balanced" scholar, both critically and theologically. He is, for example, considerably more cautious than Cullmann but less radical than Bultmann in attempting to reconstruct Jesus' own preaching. Even in a translation still marred by Germanisms, Schweizer's writing is lucid as well as incisive. He has much to teach us, and it is to be hoped that this volume is but the first of many other of his writings to be made available in English.

Victor P. Furnish

THE CHRISTOLOGY OF THE NEW TESTAMENT. *By Oscar Cullmann. Translated by S. C. Guthrie and C. A. M. Hall. Westminster, $6.50.*

Any new book by Professor Cullmann is an important event, and the present work, a historical and exegetical study, is no ex-

ception. It is, in one sense, a sequel to the author's *Christ and Time*, where his view of New Testament *Heilsgeschichte* ("saving history" or "history of salvation") was elaborated. Cullmann contends that "all christology is *Heilsgeschichte*, and all *Heilsgeschichte* is christology." His approach is to examine each of the titles applied to Jesus in the New Testament, classifying them under four headings: those that refer to Jesus' earthly work, to his future work, to his present work, and to his pre-existence. While admitting that most of the titles and categories overlap, he nevertheless concludes that the exegetical results validate this overall organization.

Cullmann's scholarship is always learned, and he has much to teach us in this book. He is certainly correct in maintaining that speculation about Christ's *nature* is of only peripheral concern in the New Testament; that it was the "first coming" of Christ, and not his second coming that was the "real theological problem" for the earliest church; and that the rigid distinction between Jewish and Hellenistic theology must be discarded.

Detailed appraisals of Cullmann's exegesis are outside the scope of this review, but certain basic questions need to be raised regarding his general approach. The most important of these relates to the preoccupation with Jesus' "self-consciousness." He maintains that "the early church believed in Christ's messiahship because it believed that Jesus believed himself to be the Messiah," and stresses the necessity of scholarly investigation of this self-consciousness. But can our sources be forced to yield such information? Cullmann, to be sure, is able to trace many of the christological titles to Jesus himself (e.g., Priest, Prophet, Son of God, Messiah, Son of man, Servant of God), but only on the basis of some doubtful presuppositions and exegesis.

For one thing, he seems to regard unanimity of synoptic tradition as proof of the authenticity of reported *logia*; for another, he makes the remarkable assertion that the synoptic writers, in contrast to John, "intended primarily only to repeat Jesus' words as he spoke them." He scoffs at Bultmann's more radical synoptic criticism, but only infrequently tries to counter Bultmann's arguments, and then not very persuasively. Moreover, the emphasis upon Jesus' self-consciousness means that the significance of the resurrection for the church's faith is correspondingly reduced. For Cullmann the resurrection is simply a "confirmation" or clarification of the "momentary glimpses of recognition during Jesus' earthly life" whereas in the New Testament itself, it alone is regarded as decisive for faith, not Jesus' "self-consciousness."

Finally, Cullmann's concentration upon the christological *titles* is artificial, as is his attempt to judge which are "more" and "less" adequate. He even asserts that Jesus himself preferred the "Son of Man" title because it was "more comprehensive." It is improbable that Jesus, or any New Testament writer, reflected very long or systematically upon the theological dimensions or the comparative merits of specific titles. Cullmann has tried to wrest from them what they contain only *in nuce*, if at all. By abstracting them from the various New Testament writings in which they occur he has lost touch with the organic integrity of each writer's thought. The basic issue is this: How may we discern a writer's "christology?" By studying the titles he applies to Jesus, or by interpreting his total theological orientation?

This book cannot be "read;" it must be studied. For the serious and discriminating student it has much to offer.

Victor P. Furnish

THE NEW TESTAMENT AND MYTHOLOGY. *By Burton H. Throckmorton, Jr. Westminster, $4.50.*

This contribution to the discussion of "demythologizing" is by the Professor of New Testament at Bangor Theological Seminary. After summarizing and criticizing the major aspects of Rudolf Bultmann's hermeneutics, Throckmorton ventures his own reinterpretation of eschatology, Jesus' pre-existence, virgin birth, crucifixion, and resurrection.

The characterization of Bultmann's program is succinct, clear, and in general quite fair. Unfortunately, however, throughout the book Throckmorton relies primarily on just one document, Bultmann's initial programmatic essay, "New Testament and Mythology."

The author frequently expresses his agreement with Bultmann, and shows the irrelevance of many of the arguments advanced by the latter's opponents. Yet Throckmorton believes Bultmann needs to be corrected, especially with regard to his view of the meaning and function of myth. Bultmann, it is claimed, thinks of myths as "primitive errors," and implies that they are intended to offer "secular proof," so that for him "mythology is irrelevant to the content of faith which is unprovable." Against this Throckmorton argues that "mythology is not a pseudoscience stemming from the childhood of the race, but is a unique way of apprehending reality. Myths are indispensable to Christianity because it is only from the language of mythology that symbols are taken, and the real insights of Christianity (as of every religion) can be expressed only symbolically."

This book will serve as a helpful introduction to the demythologizing debate. Yet it confirms this reader's conviction that too much of our discussion in this area has been carried on abstractly, apart from the concrete tasks and data of exegesis. Bultmann's program of demythologizing emerged only after forty years of wrestling with the problems of biblical interpretation. The most important document for understanding Bultmann's concerns is not his demythologizing essay, but his two volume *Theology of the New Testament*. There the results of his exegetical work are presented, and although the word "demythologizing" rarely, if ever, occurs, we are given the only possible context for an adequate appreciation of the problems of interpretation—the New Testament itself.

Victor P. Furnish

A NEW EUSEBIUS. *Edited by J. Stevenson. Macmillan, $4.50.*

Mr. Stevenson, who lectures theology at Cambridge, has here attempted to replace the long out-of-print first volume of B. J. Kidd's *Documents Illustrative of the History of the Church* with a new collection of sources, based upon but expanding Kidd's, down to 337 A.D.

Though the documents illustrate church history in its widest sense, the student of doctrinal history will also find here brief compendia of the more important fathers. There is a brief series of notes on the sources where one can quickly orient himself about authors and documentary history. There are seven pages of chronological tables correlating the general history of the period with church history, including that of the martyrs, Christian writers, and heretics.

This is the kind of book one ought to have for many kinds of reference. At a higher price it would still be a bargain.

John Deschner

METHODISTS LINKING TWO CONTINENTS. *By Friedrich Wunderlich. Methodist Publishing House, $3.00.*

When the World Missionary Conference met at Edinburgh in 1910, it marked denominationally the most inclusive ecclesiastical assembly held to that time. Yet only by agreeing to limit its purview to work "among non-Christians" (and this was interpreted in broad geographical terms) did Edinburgh enlist Anglicans. To them the presence of Protestant "missionaries" in "Christian Latin America" was abhorrent. German Lutherans also demanded the same restrictions. They resented Methodist and Baptist "missionaries" then making converts in Germany.

In several ways, this problem of missionaries in a "Christian country" is today coming to the fore. Some great new movements of Christian renewal—both Roman Catholic and Protestant—in Britain, France, and Germany begin with the premise that these countries are "pagan lands" and "mission fields." The issue also arises in another form. The Orthodox Churches of Europe and the Near East oppose the pending integration of the International Missionary Council with the World Council of Churches because they equate missions (and often justifiably) with

"obnoxious proselytism" by sectarians.

What right did American Methodism have to send missionaries to mid-nineteenth century Germany? Considerable misunderstanding exists. How did Methodism take root in the land of the Lutheran Reformation? Wunderlich, a German Methodist bishop since 1953, deals with these questions indirectly by presenting the lives of outstanding men who began what was then a branch of American Methodism in Germany: William Nast, Louis Jacoby (a converted Jew), Erhard and Friedrich Wunderlich (forbears of the author), Louis Nippert, and John Nuelsen. Except for Nuelsen, whose father fit the pattern, all were born in Germany, came to the United States, here became Methodist, and returned to Germany as pastors.

To the large and concentrated groups of unchurched Germans resulting from the waves of immigrants to this country in the 1830's and 1840's, American Methodism reached out. Converts resulted. Among them, some returned to the homeland. In relating their new Christian experience, they gave rise to the spontaneous creation of several Methodist societies in Germany. From the American side, it seemed imperative to assist these new groups with ministers: thus, Nast, Jacoby, *et al.* Wunderlich does not deal with the rise of British Methodism in Germany, but it followed the same pattern, and the two groups united in 1896.

Wunderlich provides a delightful, readable, and useful historical and biographical survey. Moreover, he left with this reviewer the dominant impression that a century ago a few German-American Methodists saw with clarity—and acted accordingly—that reality widely described today as "post-Christian" Europe.

W. Richey Hogg

GOD'S MAN: THE STORY OF PASTOR NIEMOELLER. *By Clarissa Stuart Davidson. Ives Washburn, $3.95.*
PASTOR NIEMOELLER. *By Dietmar Schmidt. Translated by Lawrence Wilson. Doubleday, $3.95.*

Are the German people in any way responsible for the death of millions of Jews in the gas chambers of Sachsenhausen, Auschwitz, and Dachau? After eight years in concentration camp, Martin Niemoeller since 1945 has been trying to help his countrymen and others see this question of involvement and responsibility from the standpoint of the Christian gospel.

But this query leads to another terribly disquieting, haunting question. Are the American people in any way responsible for the incineration of Nagasaki and Hiroshima? Both in the case of the gas chambers and of the atom bombs the ends to be achieved were judged to justify the means employed. In these related questions and in other ways the whole thrust of Niemoeller's life-witness becomes painfully relevant for American Christians.

For the most part, the churches of America are little aware of the German church struggle of the 1930's, its issues, and its meaning. Yet to their detriment and peril American Christians ignore those events, of which Niemoeller is symbol, as an interesting but vague bit of twentieth century history. The truth is that this struggle thrusts forth the most profound and heart-searching lessons for Christian faith in America. Among others, these include the responsibility of the church in the nation's social and political life; national policy and the witness of the church; the gospel's meaning for a church accommodated to and accepted as part of its surrounding culture; ah yes—and the whole sticky, embarrassing issue of Christian witness and racial discrimination. Not just "a Christian hero," Niemoeller must now be seen for what he is: a living judgment on much that in this land passes for Christian faith and practice.

Books about living, controversial figures usually leave much to be desired. Yet the two biographies here reviewed provide the most useful records thus far available of the man who moved "from U-Boat to Pulpit" and then became the symbolic figure of the resistance to Hitler by the Confessing Church. Dietmar Schmidt, a younger German pastor and scholar, has been close to Niemoeller for a decade and appears to have written primarily for a German audi-

ence. Mrs. Davidson, a mother, wife of a state senator, and a feature writer for the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch,* has written for Americans. Each book covers much the same ground, and each draws on many of the same sources. Neither book has footnotes, though Mrs. Davidson, through deft internal references and her bibliography, has made it delightfully easy for anyone to consult her sources. Mrs. Davidson's journalistic and biographical skill combine to provide the most perceptive and adequate account we have today of Niemoeller.

Both writers admire their subject, but Mrs. Davidson offers the more informative, balanced study. She deals with the questions Americans raise. Was Niemoeller's imprisonment "soft"? Was the pastor partially blind to anti-Semitism? (Her sections on Franz Hildebrandt, born of a Jewish mother, once a Lutheran and a friend of Bonhoeffer, called back from England in 1934 by Niemoeller to be his associate at Dahlem, and now a Wesley scholar and a professor at Drew, will be of special interest to Methodists.) What about Niemoeller's 1939 request to be accepted again in the German Navy? And, is Niemoeller prophet, gadfly, or both?

Neither biography attempts major assessment or theological analysis. Neither poses the important questions, though the accounts will impel the discerning reader to raise them. The books can be profitably read together, but until someone successfully completes a thorough and searching study of Niemoeller, Mrs. Davidson's book is likely to be the most cited—and will probably remain the most readable—work available. The man who was once Hitler's "personal prisoner" and was re-elected in 1958 president of the Church of Hesse and Nassau by a one vote margin needs to be known and his significance understood today by all responsible American clergy.

W. Richey Hogg

LUTHER THE EXPOSITOR: INTRODUCTION TO THE REFORMER'S EXEGETICAL WRITINGS. *By Jaroslav Pelikan. Concordia, $4.00.*

Most of the *Journal's* readers will already be aware of the American edition of *Luther's Works,* which is now in process of publication and which, when completed, will comprise some fifty-five volumes of the reformer's writings. They will also recall that one of the general editors of the project—the one responsible for the first thirty volumes of exegetical works—is the historical theologian at the University of Chicago, Jaroslav Pelikan. Those who have become acquainted with the exegetical volumes already published will surely have come to respect the extraordinary competence of Pelikan's scholarship, both as editor and as translator. They will have recognized, even from the volumes' brief introductions, that his is a knowledge of Luther's thought and work that can indeed "introduce" the reader to the deeper dimensions of the reformer himself.

To all such, the present book will be most welcome, and with abundant justification. Conceived as a "companion volume" to the first thirty books in the series, it is a full-scale study of the theory and practice of Luther's work as expositor of Scripture. In Part I, Pelikan presents the general principles of Luther's exegesis, dealing especially with the central themes of "the Bible and the Word of God" and "Scripture and tradition," while in Part II, he presents "a case study" of Luther's work by analyzing the latter's exegesis of the main texts concerning the Lord's Supper (Matt. 26:26; 26:28; John 6:51; I Cor. 10:16; 11:24; 11:26; and Heb. 9:26).

Both parts of the book, naturally, present important sides of the larger question, and each contributes significantly to a total picture of Luther's achievement as exegete. But the first part especially approaches the dimensions of a classic treatment. Not only does Pelikan set his discussion of Luther in the context of some new and profound thoughts concerning the importance of exegesis in the whole process of theological development, but he deals with the various aspects of Luther's exegesis with a mastery completely unparalleled in any of the other English-language discussions. This is particularly true of the chapter on "the Bible and the Word of God," where the paradoxical complexity and simplicity of Luther's un-

derstanding of revelation is given the most sensitive handling of which I have any knowledge. But in the other chapters also, there is more than enough to meet the highest expectations that one might bring to the book. Systematic theologians as well as historians, and pastors as well as scholars, are here presented with a discussion of Luther's theology whose importance and contemporary relevance I find it difficult to exaggerate.

This is not to say that the book is completely without fault. I myself am especially regretful that Pelikan has conceived his task as historian so narrowly as to exclude any constructive word concerning the significance of Luther's work for our present theological discussions. The alternative to prejudging Luther's contemporary significance is not, as Pelikan avers, to say nothing about it, but to pass a reasoned judgment, with the clear understanding that the reader need be bound by this judgment only to the extent of its truth. This much, it seems to me, we have every right to expect from one whose gifts and acquirements uniquely qualify him to speak to this issue.

Schubert M. Ogden

JOHN WESLEY'S THEOLOGY TODAY. *By Colin W. Williams. Abingdon, $4.50.*

This is a book about the founder of Methodism, by a Methodist professor, based on sources almost exclusively Methodist—of the Methodists, for the Methodists, by the Methodists. Within these limits, it is actually an excellent job; but the reason for these limits remains in doubt. The Methodist publisher may have sensed this, for on the dust jacket he has supplied a gratuitous sub-title: "A study of the Wesleyan tradition in the light of current theological dialogue." In the book itself, however, one looks in vain for extended or sustained "dialogue" with non-Methodist theologians—whether contemporary or historical.

Professor Williams is a highly-gifted young Australian Methodist who did his graduate work at Drew. He has ample theological talent to hold his own in theological dialogue outside the cozy confines of Wesleyan scholarship—and this makes one wish that he had done so in the preparation of this book. As it stands, it is probably the best single exposition of the salient features of John Wesley's theology that we have. Most of Wesley's theological writing has been read insightfully—if not contextually—and his main theological ideas are organized around the axis of "The Order of Salvation." Within this slightly artificial framework, Williams expounds Wesley's notions of "prevenient grace," "original sin," "repentance and justification," "the atonement," "the work of the Holy Spirit in new birth and assurance," "repentance in believers," "the doctrine of the church," "Christian perfection," and "eschatology." In an appendix he provides a very important brief study of Wesley's conception of the ministry and the problem of Methodist ministerial orders. He rounds out each chapter with concluding comments on the relevance of Wesley's doctrine "today." These comments consist largely of good counsel to Methodist readers on the significance of our Methodist involvement in the ecumenical movement. As far as they go, they are wise and useful words—worth the earnest pondering of every Methodist reader.

The most interesting sections of the book, it seemed to me, are those on prevenient grace, on "repentance in believers," on the sacraments and their correlative problem, the church and the ministry. Williams' primary source material is Wesley's *Sermons* (though on p. 8 he makes the curious statement that "In American Methodism . . . Wesley's sermons . . . are no longer part of the official doctrine"). It would make a worthwhile project for those Methodist ministers who have untattered copies of the *Sermons* on their shelves to take this book as a guide for a self-directed reading project in the *Sermons*—the sort of thing they promised themselves back in seminary days! They will have to look elsewhere, however, if they should be interested in Wesley's theological background or how he would fare in "dialogue" with Barth or Tillich.

This book adds significantly to our resources for understanding and interpreting

John Wesley's theology *from within.* But we need more than this—and so do our non-Methodist brethren who need to see John Wesley's theology in context and as a live option in the ecumenical forum. Why should Wesleyan scholarship be so ingrown? The heritage of evangelical catholicism which Wesley claimed for himself and bequeathed to us was never more significant than it is today. Yet, if we are to claim our heritage, we must set ourselves to the highly complex, tedious business of source criticism, on the one hand, and to an open-ended theological conversation with non-Methodists on the other. But how better could we follow Wesley's own theological example?

Albert C. Outler

LIFT UP YOUR EYES: THE RELIGIOUS WRITING OF LEO TOLSTOY. *Edited by Stanley Romaine Hopper. Julian Press, $5.95.*

It is difficult for a reviewer who admires Feodor Dostoevsky "this side idolatry" to deal fairly with Leo Tolstoy. Frankly, I only accepted the assignment out of curiosity: I wondered why it occurred to anybody to reissue the "religious" writings of so notorious a moralist and legalist as Tolstoy, whose views on the "teaching" of Christ are so hopelessly outmoded and who had such utopian illusions about man's power to put into practice the Sermon on the Mount. And my curiosity was heightened by the addition of an Introduction by Stanley Romaine Hopper. If he could commend a re-reading of Tolstoy there must be something I had missed!

Well, I found the thirty-one page Introduction most rewarding and exciting. Prof. Hopper almost convinced me that Tolstoy shares with "existentialism, depth psychology, Zen Buddhism, and much apologetic theology" a relevance to the twentieth century I had failed to observe. Certainly it is true that Tolstoy's writings reveal the impassioned probings of a soul in quest of itself, even if the direction of the quest was wrong from the start.

Hopper makes a good case for "reading Tolstoy from the center" and not from the periphery, but when I turned from his persuasive introduction to the essays themselves, "My Confession," "What is Religion?," etc., I just did not recognize the man Hopper had been talking about. Nevertheless, for anyone who wishes, for whatever reason, to possess the "religious" writings of this great Russian novelist in one handsome volume, here is the book he is looking for.

W. B. J. Martin

THE BOOK OF CONCORD: THE CONFESSIONS OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH. *Edited and translated by Theodore G. Tappert. Muhlenberg, $7.50.*

By common consent, one of the best things about the present structure of SS *III-CD: The Interpretation of the Christian Message* is the opportunity it provides for studying the main doctrinal standards of the historical Christian churches. Since 1958, when Professor Outler first prepared for this purpose *A Handbook of Selected Creeds and Confessions,* both students and faculty have attested to the unique significance of this phase of their work in the course. In addition to orienting us somewhat in the subject-matter of comparative symbolics, and so furthering our understanding of the church's whole process of doctrinal definition, it has sensitized us to the importance of our own standards of doctrine as Methodist Christians. Many of us are aware now as we once were not of our own doctrinal heritage, and have grown in the conviction that such awareness is of the utmost relevance for a renewal of the church in our time.

Against this background, the reader will be able to understand my reasons for commending the present book to his attention. It is a completely new English translation, representing the very best of critical scholarship (the collaborating translators are Jaroslav Pelikan, Robert H. Fischer, and Arthur C. Piepkorn), of "the historic standards of faith commonly acknowledged in the Lutheran Church." As such, it is certain to become the accepted English edition of the Lutheran confessions. We

Methodists can learn much from it not only about the Reformation basis of our own Methodist standards, but also about the abiding importance of a concern with right doctrine as essential to the church's life. The evils of a rigid "orthodoxy" are doubtless real, but they are hardly worse than those of a formless "pietism" cut adrift from the historical past and at the mercy of the prevailing winds of worldly wisdom.

Together with the new Lutheran *Service Book and Hymnal,* to which an earlier reviewer has already directed attention (Fall issue, 1960, p. 30), this book can be of genuine help and encouragement to all who are concerned with the "doctrines and discipline of the Methodist Church."

Schubert M. Ogden

THE SCHOOL OF FAITH. *Edited by Thomas F. Torrance. Harper, $6.00.*

One of the greatest obstacles to overcome in teaching theology is the generally low level of catechetical instruction among entering students. It is literally true that not more than two out of forty-two middlers recently quizzed could write down in order the main content of the ten commandments. The day seems past when candidates for church membership were expected to know and understand the basic documents of the church—the creed, the Lord's prayer, the decalogue, and the words of institution for the two sacraments. That is a perilous situation, one about which this book ought to stimulate some serious Methodist self-examination.

Superficially considered, this is a source-book, reproducing the texts of the principal larger and shorter catechisms of the Reformed Church, with special emphasis on those used in Scotland. Here are the classic formulations of Calvin, the Heidelberg theologians, the Westminster divines, as well as those of lesser known Scotch writers. The catechisms are superbly indexed so that the collection can serve as a topical source book in systematic theology as well.

But the merit of the book lies in the Introduction (115 pages) provided by the translator and editor, Prof. Torrance of the University of Edinburgh. For here we have a critical examination not only of the content, form, and doctrinal tendencies of the various catechisms, but a most useful treatment of the general principles of learning and instruction presupposed in them. That is to say, here is a book that can give us occasion to reappraise the catechetical method of instruction as such.

I believe we urgently need that reappraisal in present-day Methodism. It is superficial to say that the catechetical method means no more than rote memory work. The essential point lies in the great clarity in this educational tradition about the *content* of religious instruction, a clarity, moreover, in which it is understood that the gospel questions as well as answers the enquirer. There is an unwritten chapter in modern Christian education here. I hope this book will stimulate some of us to begin to write it.

John Deschner

HOLY COMMUNION, AN ANTHOLOGY OF CHRISTIAN DEVOTION. *By Massey Hamilton Shepherd, Jr. Seabury, $3.00.*

In the early days of this century it was not unusual for Methodist churches to have Saturday evening services in preparation for the sacrament of the Lord's Supper on the day following. This ante-communion service was not unlike the earliest Christian services that began with the Jewish worship on the Sabbath and ended with the eucharistic meal on the Lord's Day. One prepares for this great celebration of the gospel.

It may be asking too much of our generation to have a service of preparation on Saturday, but worshippers can prepare individually or as families in many ways. Massey Shepherd has prepared brief readings from a wide selection of devotional literature that is concerned with the Holy Communion. From The Didache to the Holy Eucharist of the Church of South India, the selections cover a wide range of brief but moving selections.

The author is an authority on worship and probably the outstanding one in America on *The Book of Common Prayer.* From

his knowledge of liturgical literature he has collected in this small volume a body of selected literature for a specific purpose, which is a valuable store of the worship of the church through the ages.

It is not history here that is being written, however; it is an opportunity for devout meditation and preparation. This can be a guide in our own "ante-communion" that prepares us for the Presence now. Perhaps the thought is expressed more clearly in one verse of a Wesley hymn quoted by Shepherd and not available in the Methodist Hymnal:

> We need not now go up to Heaven
> To bring the long-sought Savior down,
> Thou art to All already given:
> Thou dost ev'n Now thy Banquet crown,
> To every faithful Soul appear,
> And shew thy Real Presence here.

H. Grady Hardin

HEINRICH SCHÜTZ: HIS LIFE AND WORK. *By Hans Joachim Moser. Translated by Carl F. Pfatteicher. Concordia, $15.00.*

Heinrich Schütz (1585-1672)—or Sagittarius, as he frequently called himself—might have been known as the greatest of German Protestant musicians had there not been born just one hundred years later one greater man, J. S. Bach, to whom no one can be compared, and who just by being has reduced the status of Schütz to the mere greatest of all pre-Bach German musicians.

The merit of Schütz was that he combined a wide European perspective with the character of a highly individual artist. There were three principal musical styles asserting themselves at the end of the sixteenth century. The first was that of the domestic German-Netherlands counterpoint, which flowered in the secular song. The second stylistic center was the Roman, or Palestrina style, as we call it today. This *stilus gravis* was the style in which Schütz was later to request his funeral music to be composed. The third style, the Venetian *stilus luxurians* became the great determining new experience of German musicians in the early days of Schütz's life. When the learned Landgrave Moritz of Hessen discovered the young musician, he sent him to Venice for study under Giovanni Gabrieli. Here he learned vocal and instrumental polyphony, and as an apprentice work, composed a book of madrigals (1611), which successfully rivalled the mature madrigals of Gesualdo and Monteverdi. On his return to Germany in 1612, he became the Landgrave's organist, but was soon called to Dresden by the Elector Johann Georg of Saxony.

Schütz' first great work of German church music was the polychoral *Psalms of David,* 1619, in which he used two, three and four choruses with instruments, in the grand manner of Gabrieli. He is said to have accomplished as perfect a union of words and music in German as Purcell did in English.

In the *Symphoniae Sacrae,* published in three parts (1629, 1647, and 1650), appear the fruits of his second journey to Italy. Here the voice is treated as a solo, and instruments are used to provide dramatic color.

Schütz's longer choral works are his *Resurrection Story* (1623), the *Seven Words from the Cross* and the *Christmas Story* (1664), and three passions—according to St. Luke, St. John, and St. Matthew (1665-6). The *Christmas Story* (well recorded by Arthur Mendel and the Cantata Singers, R.E.B. editions 3) is a complex work written in dramatic style, with powerful instrumental and choral movements between which the story unfolds in recitatives and ensembles.

The passions are written in strict acappella style, and are liturgically severe. The choruses in the *St. Matthew Passion* are extraordinarily expressive and vivacious. The Bach Guild with Helmut Koch and the Berlin Chamber Choirs and soloists has made an excellent recording of the *St. Matthew Passion* (BG—519-20, offering as a bonus Nos. 9 and 10 of the *Symphoniae Sacrae*).

Concordia has published this English translation of the definitive German biography of Schütz in a format worthy of the Lutherans' appreciation of one of their most devout and creative musicians.

Fred D. Gealy

THE THEOLOGY OF DIETRICH BONHOEFFER. *By John D. Godsey, Westminster, $6.00.*

Few modern theologians have had as wide an influence on the younger generation—and especially on its thoughtful laymen—as the German martyr, Dietrich Bonhoeffer. From Buenos Aires to Tokyo, this man's suggestions about the worldliness of Christianity, about the secrecy of the Christian's discipline, about the inseparability of discipleship and suffering are being discussed and followed. Most of us are familiar with one or two of his works: *The Cost of Discipleship, Life Together,* or his posthumously published *Ethics* and letters from prison *(Prisoner for God)*. Now John Godsey, Assistant Professor of Systematic Theology at Drew, gives us a thorough introduction to the whole of Bonhoeffer. I suspect that this book will serve for some time to come as the standard introduction in English to Bonhoeffer's life and work, and as an indispensable reference for those who wish to probe more deeply into this or that aspect of Bonhoeffer's thought.

Bonhoeffer's work is here divided into three periods, and each period is introduced with a biographical sketch, as it must be for one in whom thought and life were so profoundly united. The period of the "theological foundation" (1906-31) includes the two theological dissertations, *Sanctorum Communio,* and *Act and Being,* of which Godsey's extensive summaries are the first reliable report in English. Chapter II discusses the period of "theological application" (1932-39), during which Bonhoeffer makes his mark on the ecumenical movement, the German church struggle, and theological education. Six of his works are treated here, including the most popular ones in English translation plus two which are as yet not translated. The period of "theological fragmentation" (1940-45) follows Bonhoeffer underground to his execution, and analyzes the growth of his passionate concern for a non-religious interpretation" of Christianity.

Godsey concludes with an energetic attempt to find the clue to a unified interpretation of Bonhoeffer's theological diversity. He finds it in Bonhoeffer's "christological concentration" throughout his theological life, and in this light assigns each of the three periods its successive theme: Jesus Christ as the revelational reality of the church, Jesus Christ as the Lord over the church, and Jesus Christ as the Lord over the world. This interpretation seems right and helpful to me.

This reviewer was Godsey's fellow-student when this book was being prepared as a dissertation for Karl Barth in Basel. I can testify to the imagination and exactitude of Godsey's labors to make this an accurate guide to Bonhoeffer. Seeing the book now in print, I can only rejoice at the usefulness of the project, the clarity with which it has been accomplished, and the balance of its judgments. The book can be heartily recommended to any who want an introduction to this remarkable theologian in depth.

John Deschner

GOSPEL AND MYTH IN THE THOUGHT OF RUDOLF BULTMANN. *By Giovanni Miegge. Translated by Stephen Neill. John Knox Press, $4.00.*

Of the making of books about Bultmann there is no end! And the worst part is that most of them have very little to contribute to a more adequate understanding and assessment of the issues Bultmann has raised.

This seems to me particularly so of the present volume by the Waldensian theologian, Giovanni Miegge, whom Bishop Neill already introduced to us some years ago with his translation of *Christian Affirmations in a Secular Age* (Oxford University Press, $3.75). Though Bishop Neill may be quite correct in claiming that Miegge "has read everything that Professor Bultmann has ever written, and also all the main contributions to the controversy in Germany and elsewhere," it is far from evident that Miegge has anything to say to those who are interested in Bultmann's work. At the point both of understanding interpretation and critical analysis, his writing is poorly focused and open to most serious question. Even worse, the reader is left almost completely in the dark as to the precise shape of Miegge's own constructive position. Were

it not for the brief appendix on "Bultmann and Roman Catholic Criticism," where Miegge acknowledges that his own position is essentially the same as Malevez's (in *The Christian Message and Myth*, Newman, $4.50), I should have been quite uncertain as to the point of the book.

In a word, most of what is to be had here can be got much better elsewhere, especially in Malevez.

Schubert M. Ogden

ONE IN CHRIST. *By K. E. Skydsgaard. Muhlenberg, $4.00.*

The author of this book, who is a Lutheran professor at the University of Copenhagen, counts as one of the most perceptive, knowledgeable, and constructive of Continental Protestant voices in the growing theological discussion with Roman Catholicism. Like many on both sides of this discussion, he is not interested in sterile polemics, but in discovering how the two branches of Western Christendom can live Christianly in each other's presence.

In this brief but weighty book, Skydsgaard states his understanding of the character of the Roman Catholic-Protestant encounter, and then analyzes with care the real issues concerning Scripture and tradition, the nature of the church, faith and grace, sacraments and worship, and the saints and the Virgin Mary.

This book is worth any pastor's time, especially among us in the United States, where the more constructive aspects of the Protestant-Roman Catholic encounter are not always known. Skydsgaard remains a responsible Protestant in this discussion, but he also shows us what it can mean to take Christian charity seriously as a theological virtue.

John Deschner

THE CHRISTIAN ETHOS. *By Werner Elert. Muhlenberg, $6.00.*

This is a comprehensive introduction (451 pp.) to the problems of Christian ethics by the distinguished Erlangen theologian, who is also one of the leaders of the contemporary renaissance in Luther research. In faithfulness to Luther, Elert structures his ethics according to the fundamental problem of law and gospel, but, somewhat critical of Melanchthon, he remains suspicious of any third use of the law. "The law always judges," and this means that the task of theological ethics "is not to describe man as he is or counsel people to live respectably, but to make clear how God judges man." This task is undertaken in the first two parts of the book: in "Ethos under Law," where, after a solid treatment of the doctrine of the law, the familiar themes of the orders and our guilty existence within them are presented; and then in "Ethos under Grace," where we have a presentation of the encounter with Christ, the new creation, the resulting new obedience, and the form of the Christian struggle in the world.

The most interesting section is probably Part III, "Objective Ethos," where Elert attempts to develop a positive social ethic, without recourse to the third use of the law, by exploring the implications of the biblical, the liturgical, the traditional "we," and to apply his results to the problem of the state.

This is a book that offers more light on the theological foundations of ethics than on concrete ethical problems. That light is, moreover, the light of tradition, although it must be acknowledged that it is a refreshing appropriation of the tradition of Luther himself, and not merely that of Lutheranism. Moreover, it may serve as a reminder to the Wesleyan that, although he knows the law to be the bearer of God's promise, this promise never ceases to be God's judgment, God's merciful judgment, as well.

John Deschner

POLITICS AND EVANGELISM. *By Philippe Maury. Doubleday, $2.95.*

"It is not necessary to hope in order to undertake, nor to succeed in order to persevere." This statement of William the Silent is the chosen motto of this realistic and stimulating discussion of the Christian concern for politics. The basis for the Christian's concern for politics is witness to an order which lies beyond history, but for

which signposts can be erected here and now in the midst of all the ambiguities of political life.

This is not a preacher or professional theologian speaking. Philippe Maury is a layman, a teacher of history, who is just terminating his period of service as General Secretary of the World's Student Christian Federation. And this brief book is in the nature of a testament of one who is not only a profound student of politics, but was also a leader in the French resistance, and for a time after the war, deeply involved in French political life. As might be expected, the book also presents a sharp critique of the church's customary attitude toward the world today.

The essence of the book is that the church should remain the church, offering "a political ministry," offering the example of a reconciled community, but resisting the temptation to seek political power. Meanwhile, the political action of the individual Christian is understood as "the language of evangelism." There is a realistic facing up to the problems of impossible loyalties, effectiveness and purity, risk, and compromise. The distinctive marks of Christian political involvement are a curious mixture of humor and seriousness, optimism and realism, hope and witness. The churches (one suspects, especially American churches) are asked to seek and profit by the correction of other churches before venturing to announce the Christian position on political problems. There is also an eloquent plea for the church to insist upon the possibility and necessity of human encounter and dialogue across the various "curtains" of our time. That is a simple implicate of the vocation to witness in political life.

This reviewer is not unbiased about this book. For many years, I have shared and learned from Philippe Maury's understanding of the Christian's secular witness, and more than one page recalls events in which we labored together. It is a pleasure to recommend a book which can mean much for any preacher's thinking, whether he agrees with it or not.

John Deschner

THE NEW SHAPE OF AMERICAN RELIGION. *By Martin E. Marty. Harpers, $3.50.*

In a period when church membership is percentage-wise higher than it has ever been in American history; when more church building costing more money than ever before is going on; when "interest" in religion seems more widespread than in any previous period; when more is being contributed to local and benevolent causes than ever before in our history, it has become quite the habit among observers to raise serious questions about the state of religion in America. Articles have been written about it, and books have appeared. Now comes this book on "the new shape of religion in America."

Why question it? Why not let it alone? Why not take satisfaction in it, rather than to probe into the situation? "We never had it so good before," or have we? What, if anything, is the matter with current religion? Is it really religion? In the present book there is no disposition to deny that it is religion—of a sort; but the real question is whether it is genuinely Christian, and that is the concern of the author.

The whole trouble indeed, he finds, as a result of a great deal of research, is that it is religion-in-general, rather than Christianity in its deeper meaning. It is a religion that has lost all its particularity and reduced itself to something like a least common denominator, which makes little or no more demand on those who adhere to it than what is demanded of the ordinarily decent citizen resident in Panurbia. To be sure, there are small and inconspicuous sects which still maintain a sturdy sense of particularity and which stand for something distinctive that is not accepted generally. But this is not the dominant picture of the large denominational churches. There exists in them a deplorable lack of any deep convictions. The church has tended to sink to the level of current culture, rather than standing in judgment on that culture, as is its proper function.

This is a desperately earnest study of the church, using the best modern psychological and sociological techniques. It is worthy of

deep attention. Its analyses, though to the reviewer not always necessarily true, are highly suggestive; and if they are true, they need to be just as earnestly considered in order to find some way out of the difficulty to which they point. No brief review can suggest this book's richness and suggestiveness. It is a challenging study that deserves wide and thoughtful reading by all who are in any sense in positions of leadership and responsibility for the direction that the church ought to take.

Charles S. Braden

FAITH, FREEDOM, AND SELFHOOD. *By Charles R. Stinnette, Jr. Seabury, $4.75.*

The Associate Director of Union Theological Seminary's new program in psychiatry and religion has presented "a study in personal dynamics" from the perspective of a sound biblical theology. Rather than attempting a "happy agreement" between psychiatry and religion, he indicates the points of intersection, at which the biblical view of selfhood is clinically verified by the insights of contemporary self-theory.

Faith is seen by Stinnette to be man's response in his depths to the trustworthiness and steadfastness of God. Man's freedom is thus derived from his act of faith in casting himself upon the mercy of God and finding in this relationship the power and heart of his self-realization. His selfhood is called into being through meeting and response, antiphonal response to him whose image he bears. The self, understood in the biblical sense, is a relationship in trust which is gathered and maintained in faith, realized only through communication. Man's self-identity and his capacity to become what he essentially is, rest upon "a freedom within man to accept and affirm himself in a faith relation to this ultimate concern." But apart from the church which serves as a concrete reminder of his identity, the fact that man is made in God's image becomes a sentiment without reality. The author sees the medical therapist as interested primarily in getting persons beyond the suffering arising from the predicament of their human situation, without raising ultimate concerns; whereas, the aim of the church's ministry is the opening of persons to the meaning of the Christian revelation in every crisis of life.

An incisive and provocative analysis of the Christian basis and development of the human personality, this volume is carefully annotated. Although he has drawn from many sources, Stinnette's own thought seems to have been influenced greatly by Buber, Tillich, and the corrected Freudian interpretation of personality represented by Harry Stack Sullivan. A wide and careful reading is deserved by thoughtful laymen and ministers throughout the church.

Charles H. Johnson

THE PAPERBACKS

According to several recent observers, the publishing business in America is at last becoming "big business." These observers also seem to agree that one of the reasons for this is the so-called "paperback revolution," which has become increasingly important ever since World War II. Ever advancing in scope and depth, this revolution has certainly had an effect in the field of religious publishing. Almost every house now has its paperback series, and some of the best titles in the religious field are currently appearing in this more economical form.

With no claims for an exhaustive list, mention may be made of some of the titles received by the *Journal* since our last review of paperbacks in the Fall issue, 1959.

Leading the list of one of the latest series to get underway—"Macmillan Paperbacks"—is J. B. Phillips, LETTERS TO YOUNG CHURCHES ($1.25). The many friends of Phillips' modern language version of the New Testament will be glad to learn that at least this much of it is now available in a paperback edition.

Another more recent series—"Eerdman's Paperback Editions"—includes several reprints of works reflecting a "conservative" theological concern that are of interest. This is especially true of J. Gresham Machen's classic discussion of CHRISTIANITY AND LIBERALISM ($1.75) and G. C. Berkouwer's critical but positive study, THE TRIUMPH OF GRACE IN THE THEOLOGY OF KARL BARTH ($2.45).

Barth himself is represented in a new "Anchor" original by Doubleday, COMMUNITY, STATE, AND CHURCH ($0.95), which contains in addition an excellent introductory essay on his "social philosophy" by Will Herberg. Consisting of three shorter writings from the 'thirties and 'forties, this book is a timely contribution to the current discussion of this problem occasioned by, *inter alia,* the recent election.

Of first-rank importance are five new titles in "The Scribner Library": Reinhold Niebuhr's MORAL MAN AND IMMORAL SOCIETY ($1.45); and THE CHILDREN OF LIGHT AND THE CHILDREN OF DARKNESS ($1.25); David E. Roberts' PSYCHOTHERAPY AND A CHRISTIAN VIEW OF MAN ($1.25); and the two volumes of Paul Tillich's published sermons, THE SHAKING OF THE FOUNDATIONS and THE NEW BEING ($1.25 each). Readers will know that each of these books has something of the stature of a contemporary theological classic, and will rejoice that they can now be made use of without unreasonable expense in a mature program of adult Christian education.

With one exception, the latest additions to Association Press's familiar "Reflection Books" ($0.50 each) are original titles prepared especially for the series. Bishop Stephen Neill's book, THE DIFFERENCE IN BEING A CHRISTIAN, is a reprint of *The Christian Character,* which originally appeared in SCM Press's "World Christian Books." The other authors and titles, which give a good impression of the remaining books' quality and contents, include: Stanton A. Coblentz (ed.) POEMS TO CHANGE LIVES; L. Harold De Wolf, PRESENT TRENDS IN CHRISTIAN THOUGHT; Clyde Leonard Manschreck, THE REFORMATION AND PROTESTANTISM TODAY; John W. Meister, WHAT BAPTISM MEANS; and J. Carter Swain, WHERE OUR BIBLE CAME FROM.

Finally, there are several new Harper "Torchbooks," that further enhance the lofty reputation the series has already acquired. Heading the list of these quality reprints in "The Cloister Library" (i.e., the collection of religious titles) is Ernst Troeltsch's SOCIAL TEACHING OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCHES (in two volumes at $2.25 and $2.45 respectively), with a new Introduction by H. Richard Niebuhr. Also worthy of notice is a virtually new edition of the Greene-Hudson translation of Immanuel Kant's RELIGION WITHIN THE LIMITS OF REASON ALONE ($2.35), which includes a lengthy supplement to Theodore M. Greene's original Introduction by the University of Texas philosopher, John R. Silber. Students of the Jewish philosopher-theologian, Martin Buber, will have particular interest in three other titles—two of them, reprints of Buber's own TWO TYPES OF FAITH ($1.25), and THE PROPHETIC FAITH ($1.45), and the other, Maurice S. Friedman's critical study, MARTIN BUBER: THE LIFE OF DIALOGUE ($1.60). Other titles, then, include such well-known works as Karl Barth's DOGMATICS IN OUTLINE ($1.25); Edward Comze's BUDDHISM: ITS ESSENCE AND DEVELOPMENT ($1.35); Frederick C. Copleston's MEDIEVAL PHILOSOPHY ($1.35); Henri Frankfort's ANCIENT EGYPTIAN RELIGION ($1.35); Theophile J. Meek's HEBREW ORIGINS ($1.35); Martin P. Nilsson's GREEK FOLK RELIGION ($1.25); and Evelyn Underhill's GOLDEN SEQUENCE ($1.25). To these may be added as of related interest four of the most recent accessions to "The Academy Library," which comprises all the works in the general area of philosophy and the humanities: Wilfrid Desam's TRAGIC FINALE: AN ESSAY ON THE PHILOSOPHY OF JEAN-PAUL SARTRE ($1.60); J. N. Figgis' POLITICAL THOUGHT FROM GERSON TO GROTIUS: 1414-1625 ($1.75); Arthur O. Lovejoy's GREAT CHAIN OF BEING ($1.85); and Robert Payne's HUBRIS: A STUDY OF PRIDE ($2.35).

Schubert M. Ogden